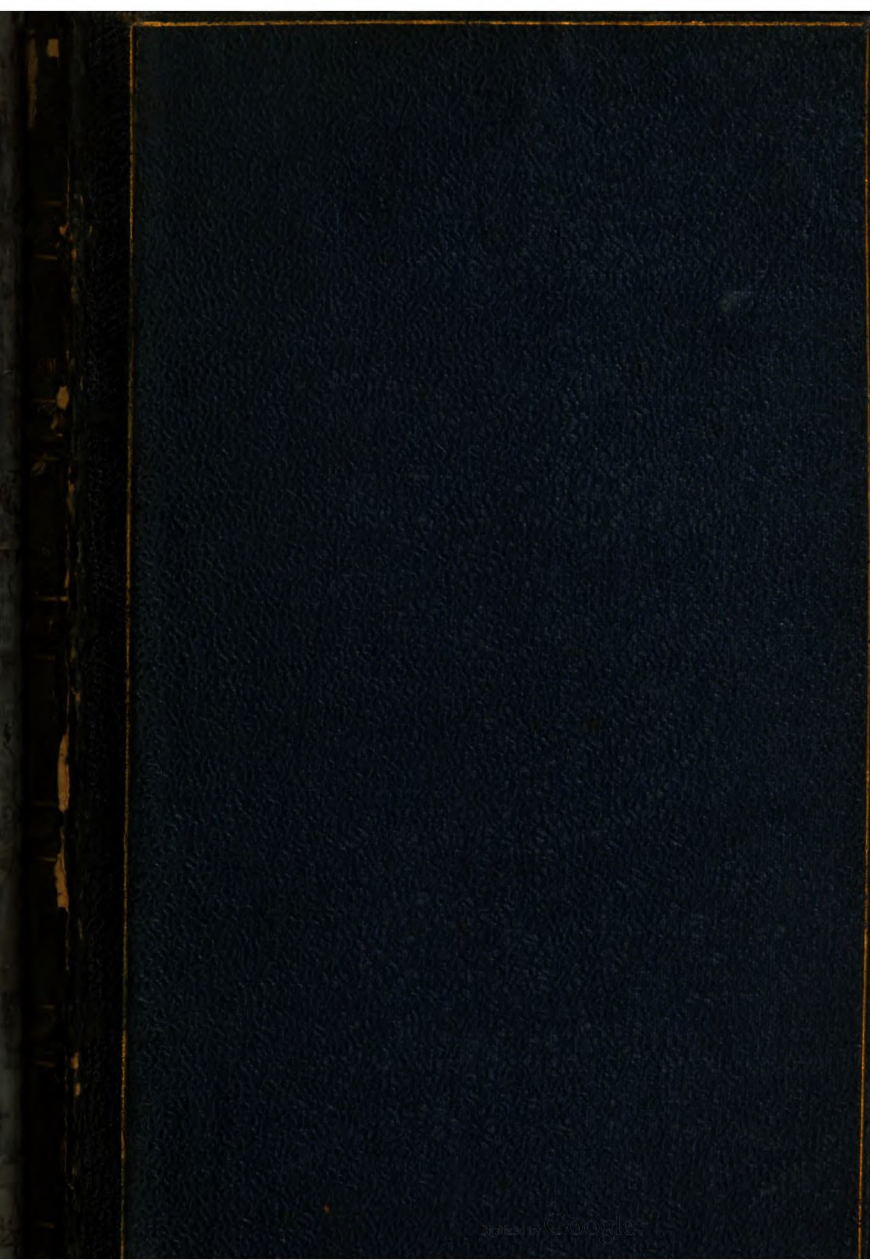
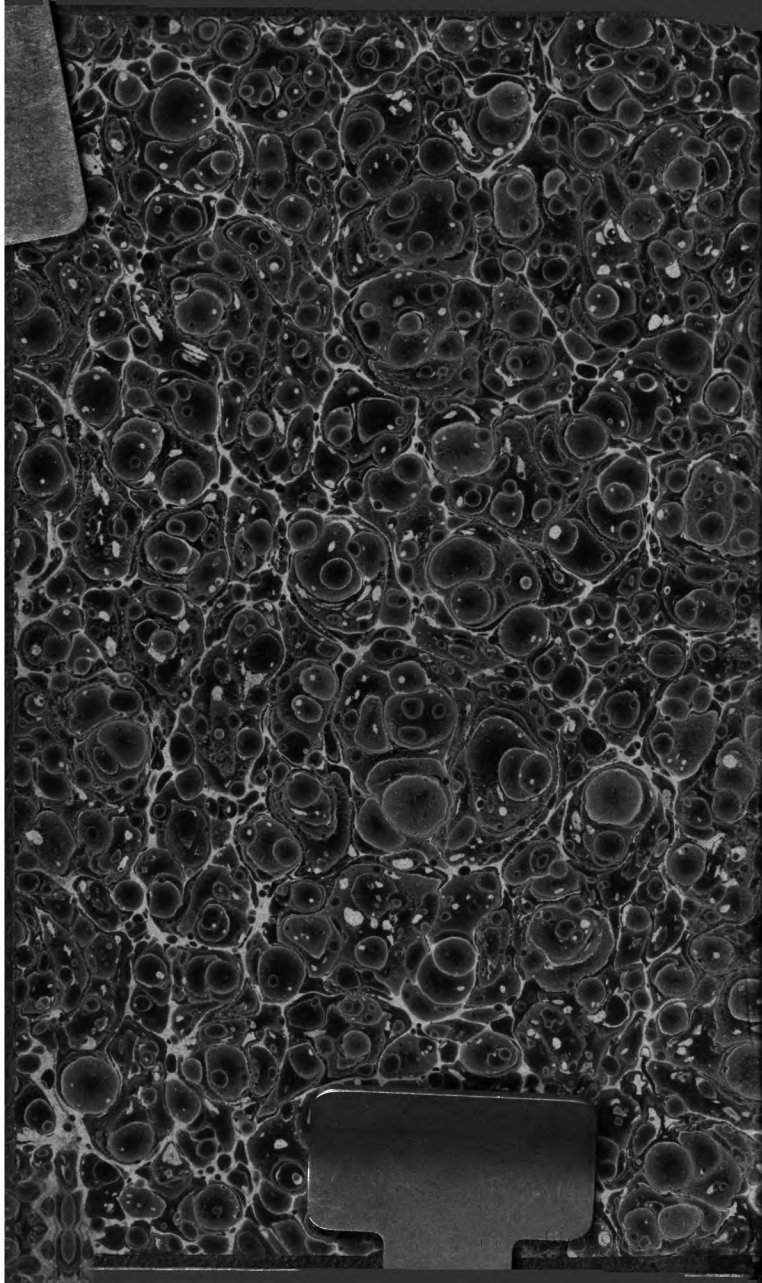

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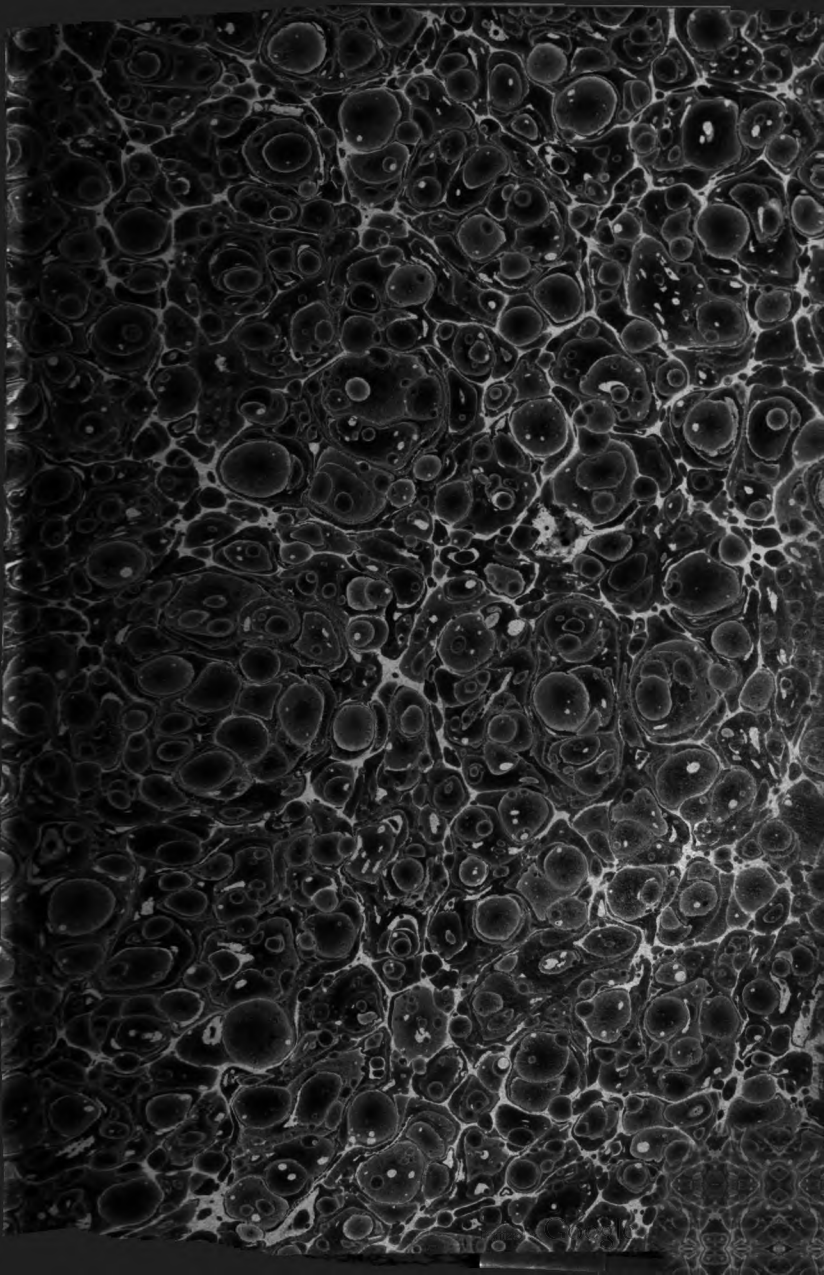
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Anglo-Catholicism.

A

SHORT TREATISE

ON THE THEORY OF

THE ENGLISH CHURCH,

WITH REMARKS ON ITS PECULIARITIES;
THE OBJECTIONS OF ROMANISTS AND DISSENTERS;
ITS PRACTICAL DEFECTS;
ITS PRESENT POSITION; ITS FUTURE PROSPECTS;
AND THE DUTIES OF ITS MEMBERS.

BY

WILLIAM GRESLEY, M. A.,

PREBENDARY OF LICHFIELD.

"Spartam nactus es, hanc exorna."

LONDON:

JAMES BURNS, 17, PORTMAN STREET.

MDCCLXIV.

RUGELEY :
PRINTED BY JOHN THOMAS WALTERS,
Market Place.

44.
3. 12.
69.



PREFACE.

IN the present position of the Church, it seemed to me desirable to set down, in a clear and succinct manner, what are the views entertained by those, who believe themselves to be consistent advocates of the principles and practices of the Church of England; and to bring together in their relative bearing to each other, those topics, on which, especially, it is necessary for Churchmen, of all classes in society, to be informed.

I wished to confine myself, as much as possible, to the statement of simple facts; but have found it necessary, in some instances, to diverge into the field of argument. In stating the position, and principles, of the English Church, it was necessary to

advert to some of the objections made against them. If any of my readers should find my arguments too compressed to be satisfactory, I would beg to refer them to the great Divines of our Church, whom I have consulted,—as Bishop Jeremy Taylor, Barrow, Leslie, and others, by whom all the points of difference between the Church of England, and other Bodies, have been fully and copiously discussed,

While preparing this volume, I have been anticipated in several of the topics contained in it, by Mr. Palmer's "Narrative of events connected with the publication of the Tracts for the Times," and by an able review of the same, in the *Christian Remembrancer*,—as well as by a well-known Article in the *Foreign and Colonial Review*.

Still I have thought the subjects treated of in this volume, so necessary to be presented to all classes of readers, that the publication would not be deemed superfluous.

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ANGLO-CATHOLICISM.

CHAPTER I.

THE SUBJECT OF THE TREATISE—ANGLO-CATHOLICISM, AS
DISTINCT FROM CATHOLICITY, OR CHRISTIANITY. IN WHAT
WAY DIFFERENT CHURCHES MAY DIFFER FROM EACH
OTHER, YET ALL BE TRUE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH
UNIVERSAL.

THE subject intended to be discussed in the following pages, and designated for the sake of brevity, by the term "Anglo-Catholicism," is the system of belief and practice adopted in the Anglican branch of the Church Universal, or in other words, *The religion of the Church of England.*

It may perhaps be thought by some, that it is incorrect to speak of the religion of the Church of England, as any thing peculiar or distinct: it is the religion of the Bible, or the same as that of the Primitive Church, or of the Church universal.

The first point, therefore, will be to explain in what sense Anglo-Catholicism is to be considered as a distinct object of contemplation,—differing from the terms Christianity or Catholicity.

It is certain that the message of Salvation, which the Apostles preached to all nations, was the same everywhere. All nations were invited to believe, and to be baptized, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and it was declared to all that “he that believeth and is baptized should be saved.” And the Apostles everywhere promulgated the same discipline and regulations,—“as they went through the cities they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the Apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.”¹

¹ Acts xvi. 4.

The same form of worship, the same creeds, the same Sacraments, the same government under Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, were every where established ; and eventually the same Holy Scriptures, as from time to time they were written, were every where received. In short, the Churches which the Apostles established were universally the same ; or rather, they were uniform and living branches of one Church Catholic or universal. Still, as in the hearts of individuals, the Christian faith, received in purity, may have a different bias and development according to the character and circumstances of the recipient,—as, for instance, the faith of St. John was developed in love, that of St. Peter in zeal, that of Mary in devotion, that of Martha in activity ; and as we perceive amongst those whom we esteem to be good men a very different form of character and mode of conduct, so it is in different Churches—the form of their faith has been greatly modified by their local circumstances and national characteristics. This variation would be the more marked in Churches which had declined, in any degree, from their Apostolic purity. And what Church has not done so more or less ?

Thus, while the faith of the Thessalonians grew exceedingly, and their charity towards each other abounded, so as to rejoice the heart of St. Paul;¹ we find in the Church of Corinth, a tendency to schism and self-will, such as might have been expected in a rich and intellectual community;² and in the Galatian Church, a disposition to rest on the obsolete ordinances of the Jewish ritual.³ St. John, also, in his description⁴ of the Churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, intimates that a distinctive variety of character had already been developed amongst them. If, then, so soon after their establishment by the Apostles, and even while they were yet under apostolic superintendence, we find great diversities of character in various Churches, it is reasonable to suppose that still greater differences should arise in the lapse of centuries.

First, as regards rites and ceremonies. Our own Article declares that "It is not necessary that traditions and ceremonies should be in all places one, and utterly alike, for at all times they

¹ See 1 Thess. i. 2.

³ Gal. iii.

² 1 Cor. i.

⁴ Rev. ii. 3.

have been diverse, and may be changed according to the diversities of countries, times, and men's manners; so that nothing be ordained against God's Word. Every particular or national Church hath authority to ordain change and abolish ceremonies, or rites of the Church, ordained only by man's authority, so that all things may be done unto edifying.¹ Here we have an element of great diversity. It is manifest that the same ceremonial may not be suitable to a hot and cold climate, to a rich and poor country, to a highly civilized and rude community. Therefore, while those ordinances which are laid down in Scripture as essential, as the two sacraments; and those which are of so universal, and of so early a foundation as to warrant the strong belief that they were instituted by the Apostles themselves; as, for instance, the observance of the Lord's Day, infant baptism, and episcopal ordination—while these have been retained in all branches of the Church Catholic, there are many minor ceremonies which appear, in different places, under various aspects, and the whole form of worship

¹ Article xxxiv.

may be very dissimilar in different Churches, and, nevertheless, each Church may be free from error.

The revolutions of nations, also, must of necessity produce great diversities. A Church suffering under persecution will appear very different in external circumstances from one enjoying the friendship of the civil powers. A Church established would differ, in many respects, from one unestablished, although in all essentials the very same.

And not only as regards the form of worship, but the form of doctrine, there may be apparently a considerable difference in different churches, and yet essential truth may be preserved. Some Churches may be in the habit of dwelling more on one doctrine, and some on another; yet without denying or suppressing those truths, which, nevertheless, they do not make sufficiently prominent. It is, no doubt, a fault to magnify any doctrine beyond its due proportion, or unduly to extenuate any Gospel truth; yet it is possible that this apparent partiality may arise, in some degree, from the necessity of circumstances. Suppose that in any particular place grievous errors have sprung

up, and it has been necessary for the rulers of that Church to protest against them, and to annex such protest to the ancient formularies; as, for instance, some of our own thirty-nine Articles; this annexation will, doubtless, give a peculiar character to that Church, and will distinguish it from others; and persons taking a superficial view might consider the essence of the Church to consist in its peculiarity, rather than in those deep and vital principles which it has in common with the Church universal. It may also happen that some practice laudable in itself may have been greatly abused, and the rulers of a particular Church may have seen cause to repress it; while it has remained without scandal in other communities. In short, it is very possible to imagine a multitude of circumstances, through which the form both of worship and doctrine in particular Churches may, in the course of their history, have come to vary considerably, yet without any real difference in essentials. All may still continue "in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship," yet may have each a peculiar form of development.

Thus great differences may exist even with strict propriety; but it is also very possible to

imagine that particular Churches may have *erred* in the additions or suppressions which they have made, and yet may not have *so far* erred as to forfeit the character of Churches, since they still retain the essential marks. One Church may have erred in one way, and one in another. One may be deficient in discipline, another in doctrine, another may be over-abundant in these respects; and yet, if these Churches retain the essentials, and convey grace to their members, they will continue to be the true Churches of the countries in which God has placed them; and it shall not be possible for any to withdraw themselves from them without incurring the guilt of schism. As the human body may be curtailed of several of its members, or swollen to a monstrous size without being deprived of life, so may a Church be maimed or corrupted and yet continue a living Church. And as a parent claims the reverence and submission of his children, even though deficient in some of his parental duties, so may a Church claim the adherence of her sons, though her practice might, in some respects, be amended.

There is, of course, a limit to this principle,

and an important and difficult question presents itself, to what extent a Church may be corrupted or mutilated; and still be to us the appointed channel of grace, and claim our obedience on pain of the guilt of schism; and, on the other hand, at what point it becomes our duty to withdraw from communion, or subject ourselves to forcible excommunication.

In the following pages I propose to confine my view to the Church of which the Providence of God has made us members. My object shall be to shew, first, that the Church of England has the essentials of a Christian Church, both as regards its legitimate descent from the Apostles, and also its retention of all essential marks, whether of doctrine or discipline; and, therefore, that it claims our obedience as being undoubtedly the true Church in this land. Secondly, to point out the peculiarities of the English Church; and to shew how it differs from other Churches; whether those differences are the natural and unavoidable result of her circumstances, and proper to be maintained; or whether they are such as may be advantageously remodelled, and reduced more into conformity with the original type of the Church Primitive

and Apostolic; or lastly, whether they are corrupt departures from her own true and acknowledged principles.

CHAPTER II.

SHEWING THE IDENTITY OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH FROM
THE BEGINNING.—POPULAR OBJECTIONS TO THE APOSTOLI-
CAL SUCCESSION ANSWERED.

IN order to give consistency and clearness to the argument proposed, it will be necessary to advert occasionally to topics which have been recently so much discussed that few can be ignorant of them. Such topics will need to be spoken of only in a summary manner.

Of this nature is the fact of the *identity of the English Church* from the beginning down to the present time.

We have undoubted historical evidence of the existence of a pure branch of the Church universal, governed by Bishops, and possessing all the marks of a true Church from the earliest

times. If not founded by one of the Apostles, still no doubt was ever entertained that the Bishops of the ancient British Church derived their orders from them in a regular manner. At the time of the Saxon invasion, the British Church was much oppressed; but when the Saxons themselves had been converted by the mission of St. Augustine, the two Churches, that is to say, the ancient British and the Saxon gradually coalesced¹ into one, and whether we trace the succession of our ministry through St. Augustine, who received his orders from the Gallican Church, or through the ancient British line, the fact of their being duly ordained and descended from the Apostles, and so from Christ himself is undeniable. And so the Church of England has continued down to the present

¹ The Welch Church was united with the English in the reign of Henry I. Before that time there were Welch Archbishops of St. David's. Bishop Tremorin who officiated for Bishop Athelstan at Hereford for thirteen years, from A. D. 1042 to 1055, was one of the British succession, from those who opposed Augustine at the synod of Augustine's oak. Their succession was never superseded; consequently the two successions have been blended together from the time when the Welch Church acknowledged the archiepiscopal rights of the see of Canterbury over Wales, in the time of Bishop Bernard of St David's, A. D. 1120.

E. C.

age. There was no period of time when the continuity of the Church, or the line of Bishops ceased. Bishop has succeeded Bishop in lineal succession, from the first founder down to the present Bishops and Archbishops. The only period when any doubt was thrown on the succession, was at the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth; but it is easy to shew that no interruption then took place. We know that the English Bishops, as a body, concurred in the Reformation of the sixteenth century, and remained Bishops after the Reformation, as they had been before; and though they were forcibly expelled in the time of Queen Mary, yet by the decree of Divine Providence, a sufficient number of the old Bishops survived, till the accession of Elizabeth, to continue the succession; though the intrusive Bishops, appointed by Mary, refused their adherence to the doctrine of the reformed Church. This preservation of the Apostolical Succession we may well believe to have been by the special intervention of divine Providence; as we believe that through the same means the Bible, the Sacraments, and the Christian faith have been maintained and will be maintained to the end of time. The same thing happened at the time of the great

Rebellion, when the Church was again partially overthrown. The surviving Bishops and Clergy were, at the Restoration, reinstated together with the King; and so the identity of the Church was continued.

A very moderate acquaintance with the course of events is sufficient to assure any one that the Church, at present existing, is identical by lineal continuity with that which was founded in this island at the beginning of the Christian era. Each Bishop can trace his pedigree from the Apostles. By these Bishops the inferior clergy have been continually consecrated. The ancient Sees founded by St. Augustin, St. Chad, St. Swithin, and other Saints and Martyrs have, for the most part, remained the same. The boundaries of our ecclesiastical parishes are in general those which existed in the time of our Saxon forefathers. The inhabitants from father to son, through time of peace and war, of ignorance or learning, of darkness or of light, have still been admitted by baptism into the visible Church which God hath set in the land, and have received the Holy Communion one with another, and professed their faith in the same Father, Saviour, and Sanctifier, and still

worship in the same general form of liturgy, and frequently in the same words which were used in times immemorial. Thus the Church of England has been continuous and identical.

The very edifices in which we worship God (if not in many instances portions of the original structure) occupy in general the site which they have done for ages, and in a multitude of cases bear in their construction and architecture evident traces of having witnessed the revolutions of successive ages. You shall trace often in the same parish church the architecture of the Norman invaders the Plantagenets, the Tudors and the Stuarts. While the sepulchral monuments scattered in our churchyards, or preserved in the sacred edifices, shew that on that consecrated spot repose the mortal remains of many a long line of nobles, or franklins, or those of low degree,

“The rude forefathers of the hamlet,”

who, generation after generation, have constituted the living members of the Anglo-Catholic Church.

There may have been many corruptions and declensions, and many reformations more or less

complete, still the Church has continued from the beginning—

“One and the same through all advancing time.”

With regard to the important fact of the Apostolical succession, it has been thoughtlessly objected that, in so great a lapse of time as that which has intervened between the Apostles and ourselves, it is not easy to believe that the succession should have been preserved entire. But this objection seems to have little force, or even plausibility.

First, observe that at no period of the Church's history was it at all likely that any person would have been allowed to enter upon the Episcopal office, without regular ordination. The greatest care was always taken to preserve the true succession. Augustin returned to France for the purpose of receiving consecration. At the time of Elizabeth, this point was anxiously attended to. Towards the close of the Commonwealth, it is well known that it was the intention of the exiled Bishops to have ordained successors, had the Restoration been so long delayed as to cause fear for the interruption of the line. At the present time, we

know that it is impossible for any person to assume the Episcopal office in the Church, without lawful authority; and the feeling on this subject was even stronger in ancient days than it is now. Therefore, it is highly improbable that any false Bishop has ever intruded into the Anglican Church.

But, secondly, it is to be noted, that the universal practice has been for *three* Bishops to concur in the consecration of every new Bishop; whereas *one* is sufficient to convey the Episcopal authority: hence the ordination of no Bishop would be invalid, unless his three pretended consecrators were no Bishops. If one of the consecrators, were a fictitious Bishop, his fictitiousness would not invalidate the act of the two others,—so that the wound would at once be closed in a single generation. As when, in some principal artery the blood is stopped, nature has provided a remedy, so that the blood flows in a number of collateral vessels, which soon become enlarged to the necessary size; so has Divine Providence ordained a number of channels whereby the episcopal authority is conveyed: and thus, instead of the chances being in favour of the failure of the Apostolical suc-

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cession, they are infinitely against it, so as to amount almost to an impossibility. The Apostolical succession is not a single chain, whereof if one link be broken the chain is destroyed; but it consists of a multiplicity of chains, so intertwined and reticulated one with another, that a single broken link would scarcely be perceptible.

Another objection has been raised by certain Protestant sectarians—namely, that the succession of the English Church has been derived through Romanist Bishops, who, being themselves unsound in doctrine, could not transmit the succession. To this it may be answered, first, that they never were so unsound as not to be Christian Bishops; secondly, that the transmission of Episcopal power does not depend on the soundness of doctrine, but on the validity of the commission. It is a parallel case in this respect with that of any set of trustees. Suppose an existing generation of trustees found out that their predecessors had greatly abused their trust, or even perverted it to improper uses, this circumstance does not invalidate the fact of their having transmitted their trust to those who now possess it. All that the present

possessors have to do is to take heed that they perform their trust better than those who have gone before them. The transmission of the trust is unimpaired.

So whatever may be our opinion of the condition of the Church in the middle ages, still there can be no doubt that its identity is preserved and transmitted. Just as a river remains the same from age to age, though at one while turbid and swollen, and at another attenuated into a mere rivulet.

CHAPTER III.

SHEWING THAT THE ANGLO-CATHOLIC CHURCH RETAINS
ALL THE ESSENTIALS OF A TRUE CHURCH—THE BIBLE
THE CREEDS, THE SACRAMENTS, AND ALL NECESSARY
CHRISTIAN ORDINANCES.

HAVING thus shewn the identity and continuity of the English Church, as a visible body, from its first foundation to the present time, the next thing to be proved is, that it maintains the essentials of the Christian faith, and is in a condition to afford the means of grace and salvation to its children.

First, then, it is obvious, that we possess *the Bible* in unrestricted use; we acknowledge those Holy Scriptures which have been received in the Church from the beginning; and these are freely opened to the people: on this point the Romish Church differs from ours;—first, in withholding the Scriptures from the people,

except under certain circumstances ; and, secondly, in accounting the Apocrypha as inspired, which we do not. With regard to the rejection of the Apocrypha, the Anglican Church agrees with the primitive Christian Church as well as with the Jewish.

Secondly, we retain *the Creeds* which have always been received in the Church from the beginning, as the authorised summary of the Christian faith. The value of the Creeds is very great. It might, perhaps, be thought that, having the Bible, it mattered little whether we have the Creeds or not, since they contain but a series of facts or propositions gathered from Holy Writ. But this is not the true case. The Creeds, though agreeing with the Bible, and capable of being "proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture," constitute in themselves an independent testimony to the truth. The several articles of the Apostles' Creed were held before the New Testament was written, and, therefore, obviously could not have been gathered from it. The Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian, contain the testimony of the Church as to the reception of the principal doctrines of revelation. Some persons

may suppose that they could of themselves have gathered from the Bible the great doctrines of the Scripture, such as that of the Trinity, and of the Holy Catholic Church. It is very well to feel so certain of the truth of our doctrine, as not to conceive the possibility of others gathering from Scripture anything contrary to it. Still the fact that even learned men have interpreted Scripture differently is undeniable; and, if so, much more would the unlearned be liable to fall into the same error. Most thankful, therefore, ought we to be that the Creeds have been prepared and handed down to us by the Church. They are, in truth, of inestimable value;—for while the Bible contains all necessary truths, the Creeds so methodize, and set forth, and illustrate the principal articles of faith, as to preserve the Church in essential unity of doctrine. We have in the Creeds an invaluable treasure provided for us, as our safeguard against heresy and false doctrine, in essential points, and never to be laid aside without the greatest danger, or rather a virtual departure from the doctrine of the Church of Christ.

On the subject of the doctrine of the Anglican Church, I will add the statement of

Bishop Jeremy Taylor:—"For its doctrine, it is certain it professes the belief of all that is written in the Old and New Testament—all that which is in the three Creeds, the Apostolical, the Nicene, and that of Athanasius, and whatsoever was decreed in the Four General Councils, or in any other truly such; and whatsoever was condemned in these, our Church hath legally declared to be heresy. And, upon these accounts, above four whole ages of the Church went to heaven; they baptised all their catechumens into the faith; their hopes of heaven were upon this and a good life; their saints and martyrs lived and died in this alone; they denied communion to none that professed their faith. 'This is the Catholic faith,' so saith the Creed of Athanasius; and, unless a company of men have power to alter the faith of God, whosoever live and die in the faith are entirely Catholic and Christian. So that the Church of England hath the same faith, without dispute, that the Church had for four or five hundred years, and, therefore, there could be nothing wanting here to saving faith, if we live according to our belief.¹

¹ Works of Bishop Jeremy Taylor, Vol xi, 185. edition of 1828.

Thirdly, we have retained *the Sacraments* instituted by our Lord when upon earth, and by the Apostles delivered to all the Churches. These are essential. Without baptism, no member can be admitted to the Christian Church, nor without eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ, can any continue in it—Speaking generally.¹ We have retained the mode and the very words, in which the Sacrament of Baptism was instituted, and also, in essentials, the ancient form of administering the Holy Eucharist. Some regret that there is not more distinct mention of its sacrificial nature, as there is in the Scotch liturgy. Still, in whatsoever sense, the Holy Eucharist is a sacrifice, it is equally so, if rightly administered, whether the fact is distinctly set forth or not.

As regards the Sacraments, the Anglican Communion is advantageously contrasted, both with Protestant sectarians and Romanists. Our Sacraments are administered by those of whose authority to administer them there is no doubt. Our Lord commanded his Apostles to baptise all nations, and the same body were authorised to

¹ John vi, 53. See also the Church Catechism on Sacraments.

bless or consecrate the elements ; and, from them, the same commission has been handed down to the ministers of the Anglican Church. But those Protestant communities which have lost the Apostolical commission, labour under the fearful doubt as to the validity of their Sacraments—a doubt which, when we consider the vital importance, nay, absolute necessity, of the Sacraments in the Christian scheme, may well cause the most serious misgivings and apprehensions to those who cannot be sure of their validity. A similar difficulty exists with regard to the administration of the Lord's Supper by the Romish Church, in which the people generally are denied the privilege of participating in the blood of Christ. We may earnestly hope that the essence of the Sacrament may be contained in the administration of the bread alone ; still there is no proof or certainty of it. Undoubtedly, it is contrary to the plain words of Scripture, and to the practice of the ancient Church ; and it may be well questioned whether there exists in the Church any power competent to make so apparently essential a change as regards obedience to a positive command of Christ, received in one way by the universal Church.

Fourthly, with respect to the other *ordinances*, and especially the public services, the English Church retains the general form and outline of the liturgy which was used in the ancient Church, having rejected many things of modern introduction.

There will, of course, always be differences of opinion, as well as of taste, as to the mode of conducting public worship. Some will like more, and some less, of show and ceremony. To some the simplicity of the English ritual appears to contrast advantageously with the more varied and intricate services of the Romish Church. All that is necessary here to observe is, that the English Prayer Book contains all essential formularies for the due worship of God, and for the edification of its members.

There are some alleged omissions in our services; but as it is not contended that they are of importance enough to constitute an essential defect in the Anglican system, they need not now be discussed.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PECULIARITIES OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH: ITS ISOLATION: ANTIPATHY TO ROME.

THOUGH the Apostles preached everywhere one Gospel, and founded everywhere one Church, and though the English Church is identical by lineal continuity, with that of the Apostles, and has retained all the essentials of the Apostolic communion, yet, as we before observed, it was both probable and indeed unavoidable, that many variations should, by lapse of time and circumstances, be introduced into particular Churches: and the English branch has shared this variation with the rest.

The first obvious cause of peculiarity in the English Church, even at an early time, was its insular position, and distance from the centre of civilization. Hence, to mention one or two early instances, the British Church had adopted

a different method of calculating Easter¹ from the rest of the Western Church, and violent disputes took place on this subject between the ancient Britons and Saxons, until the influence of the latter prevailed. When the Pope of Rome enjoined the use of images in churches, the English Bishops were amongst those who at the Synod of Francfort covered themselves with honour, by protesting against, and rejecting, the sinful innovation. The English nation never completely submitted to the usurped authority of the Pope, and were continually refusing to acknowledge his claim; and it is to the independence of the English people that we may attribute the wide influence of the crude opinions of Wickliffe, in the fourteenth century, which led to the necessary Reformation of the sixteenth. The isolation which characterized the Anglican Church in early times, was increased by the fact, that the Pope of Rome, to whom circumstances had given extensive influence, declined to concur in the Reformation, and his successors have refused to sanction it, to the present day; while, on the other hand, *some* Churches, which concurred with the English as to the necessity of reformation, proceeded in so

¹ See Churton's *Early English Church*, p. 34.

rash and ill-advised a manner, as to disjoin themselves from the Church universal.

With regard to this isolation of the English Church, much as it is to be regretted in the abstract, earnestly as we ought to pray that God will one day restore unity to His Church,—it may be questioned whether, at the present time, we should profit by a closer intercourse either with the Churches in the Romish communion, or with the Continental Protestants. While superstition and image worship are unreformed in the one, and rationalism spreads its baneful influence on the other, it may well be doubted whether we are not better in our own insulated position—ready to hail with joy any real demonstration of their return to sound doctrine and practice, but, at the same time, jealously guarding ourselves against the contamination of their evil deeds and principles. The English Reformation was happily effected with the concurrence of the rulers, both in Church and State. Hence, humanly speaking, the preservation of our Episcopate, which was lost in other countries, when abuses were swept away by popular violence, in opposition to the efforts of existing authorities. In regretting, therefore, the isola-

tion of the Anglican Church, we must remember with gratitude that it is partly owing to that peculiarity, which is our greatest glory, namely, that *England stands forth as the only Church where abuses have been reformed, and the Apostolic fellowship preserved.*

The circumstances of the Reformation have been productive of many other peculiarities and peculiar tendencies in the English Church, which have clung to her ever since. One is the marked antipathy to Rome, and every thing savouring of Popery, which characterizes not the vulgar only, but most of our ablest divines. This feeling was scarcely to be avoided. The antipathy is natural, though on some accounts to be deplored. Rome usurped an unjust authority over us—led us, or rather forced us, into grievous errors—not only refused to join in our Reformation, but thwarted us to the extent of her power, and afterwards excommunicated, or, at least, pretended to excommunicate us, and was the first to establish a schismatical communion amongst us. Truly, we have no cause to love her, on the score of these her doings, though, certainly, we owe her some gratitude for having converted our Saxon fore-

fathers from Paganism. But the prejudice against her, on account of recent injuries, preponderates, at present, over our gratitude for past benefits. And this characteristic antipathy is productive of mixed results. We have, in consequence of it, a most wholesome prejudice against anything approaching to image-worship ; any symptom of imposture or priestcraft we will not tolerate ; we are quite free from superstition. But, to set off against these positive advantages, the same antipathy to Rome has greatly contributed to impair our reverence and piety. In our aversion to what we call "mummery," we have divested our service of much of its decency and order. In our dislike of ecclesiastical tyranny, we have imbibed a schismatical spirit of disobedience to all authority whatever. In our jealousy for the authority of Holy Scripture, we have come to idolize our own private interpretations of it. It might have been thought that, after three hundred years of separation from Rome, we should have been in a condition fairly to consider our respective positions. But such is not the case. Our antipathy still exists, and effectually prevents us from a calm consideration of events. We cling

to our worst abuses as excellencies, if they appear to contrast with the practice of Rome; and refuse to admit the slightest deviation from our ordinary customs, which can be supposed in any way connected with that communion. A procession of children, chaunting a Psalm, from the school-house to the church porch, would be reckoned a most dangerous innovation. To deck a church on Christmas Day is orthodox; but on Easter Sunday it would be Popish. One of our greatest losses is the suspicion which attaches itself to anything approaching in the slightest degree to a monastic institution. Our old cathedrals, indeed, are tolerated; but any body of persons building for themselves a new cathedral, and performing the daily services in it, would be looked on as madmen. The same prejudice is felt for even the most obviously useful institutions, as those of the "Sisters of Charity," and "Christian Brothers," who voluntarily undertake to relieve the distresses, and conduct the education, of the poorer classes. Hence it happens that the Church of England loses the services of many of the most zealous of her members, or drives them away to other communions. And all this from our jealousy of

what, though in reality primitive, we persist in regarding as Popish.

How long this peculiarity will remain amongst us is difficult to say. Certainly no reasonable cause for cherishing it can be assigned. We have reformed ourselves in spite of the Church of Rome; she refuses to follow us, and there is no help for it, but that we should remain dis-united so long as she is unreformed. We cannot restore our images to please her, nor will we submit to her Bishops. Still it seems unreasonable that we should suffer our antipathy to Rome to interfere with our own welfare and improvement.

CHAPTER V.

THE ALLEGED ERASTIANISM OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

FOR the sake of some of my readers, it may be worth while to mention, that Erastus was a German Divine, of the sixteenth century, who maintained that the government of the Church ought to be vested in that of the nation in which it is planted, and that its form should be such as might be prescribed, from time to time, by the ruling power in each country; that ministers had no power of absolving or excommunicating; no authority to repel communicants; in short, that there was no such thing as Church authority, and that the Church was the mere creature of the State.

All this is entirely contrary to the written documents of the Anglican Church. The form

of Church Government under which we live is distinctly asserted to be grounded on Scripture and primitive antiquity. The preface to the Ordination Service begins thus:—"It is evident unto all men diligently reading the Holy Scripture, and ancient authors, that, from the Apostles' time, there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church ;—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons: which offices were evermore had in such reverend estimation, that no man might presume to exercise any of them, except he were first called, tried, examined, and known to have such qualities as were requisite for the same; and also by public prayer, *with imposition of hands*, were approved and admitted thereunto by lawful authority." This doctrine is strictly acted on, and no one is allowed to exercise any function in the ministry of the Anglican Church, unless he be lawfully ordained thereto by the Bishop, according to the Apostolic usage. Each Bishop receives his authority by the imposition of the hands of the Archbishop, and others assisting; and to each Priest the Bishop solemnly says:—"Receive the Holy Ghost, for the office and work of a Priest in the Church of God, *now committed to thee by the im-*

position of our hands. The Thirty-nine Articles are declared to have been "*agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops of both provinces, and the whole Clergy*, in the Convocation holden at London, in the year 1562, for the avoiding diversities of opinion, and for establishing consent touching true religion." And, in fact, the various alterations and reformations of our formularies have been effected by the authority of *the Church*, as well as the State. "The whole liturgy was brought into that state in which it now stands, and was unanimously signed by both Houses of Convocation, of both provinces, on Friday the 20th of December, 1661; and being brought to the House of Lords the March following, both Houses very readily passed an act for its establishment; and the Earl of Clarendon, then High Chancellor of England, was ordered to return the thanks of the Lords to the Bishops and Clergy of both provinces, for the great care and industry shewn in the review of it. *It has, therefore, all authority, both ecclesiastical and civil.*"¹ Hence, to call the Church of England an Act of Parliament Church is clearly false and invidious. The Act of Parlia-

¹ Mant's Introduction to the Book of Common Prayer.

ment was but the formal consent of the lay portion of the Church to what had been already devised and agreed on by their Bishops and Convocation.

As regards the Holy Communion, it is directed that "if any of those" who desire to partake of it "be an open and notorious evil liver, or have done any wrong to his neighbour by word or deed, so that the congregation be thereby offended, the Curate having knowledge thereof shall call him, and advertise him, that in anywise he presume not to come to the Lord's Table, until he hath openly declared himself to have truly repented and amended his former naughty life." With reference, therefore, to the authority of particular ministers, as well as its general constitution, it is manifest that the Anglican Church is not liable to the charge of Erastianism.

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that, practically, the Church of England is subject to serious state-interference. It is notorious that her Convocation has been silenced for the last century. The form of election, indeed, is kept up as regularly as that of Members of Parliament ; but no sooner has the Convocation

assembled, than it is again dissolved by the Sovereign. Meanwhile important measures are taken by Act of Parliament, such, for instance, as the suppression and re-arrangement of Bishoprics, without an opportunity being given to the Church to express her sentiments in a legitimate manner. Again, as regards the appointment of Bishops, the ancient form of election is maintained, and every proper ceremony gone through by the Dean and Chapter of the Diocese in which the Bishopric is vacant, with this slight alteration, that the Queen sends a letter missive nominating the person to be elected; and, if the Chapter refuse to elect the nominee of the Crown, they are liable to the statute of *præmunire*, which subjects them to fine and imprisonment. Nor is this all; for if, within a given time, they do not elect the person nominated, the Queen proceeds to install him in the Bishopric in spite of their refusal. Archbishops and Bishops are subject to the same penalties, if they refuse to consecrate; but their refusal is more effective than that of the Dean and Chapter; for since it is admitted that no one can be made a Bishop without episcopal consecration, the Bishops, if they are resolved to brave the

terrors of the law, can prevent the appointment of an improper person. While there is perfect harmony between the Church and the Government, this state of things is of comparatively small importance, except that Bishops have been too often chosen for mere political reasons; but now that Parliament consists not only of very indifferent Churchmen, but of members of all denominations, and the Queen's Minister is obliged to conform to the will of the majority, it is possible to imagine circumstances of very great difficulty to arise.

However, this interference of the State is by no means peculiar to the English Church. Other Churches are far more restricted and enslaved. In the Greek Church, the Patriarch of Constantinople is the nominee of the Grand Seignior or Emperor of the Turks; and the Emperor of Russia transfers whole dioceses from one communion to another, according to his own will and pleasure. The suppression of the Irish and Welsh Bishoprics, without the concurrence of Convocation, though a sufficiently arbitrary act, was not quite so outrageous as the treatment received by the Church from the Russian Despot. And where shall we look for indepen-

dence in the Romish Communion? In France? in Spain? or in Russia? Surely, in all these countries, the Church has little reason to boast of her exemption from state interference. Perhaps it will be said, that in Italy, at least within the Papal States, the Church is not independent only, but dominant. Instead of submitting to the State, she is the State itself. But this is not the position we should covet for our own Church. We do not desire to see our Bishops absorbing to themselves such influence, as to set aside the power of Lords and Commons, and elect one of their body as supreme governor. An ecclesiastical tyranny like this would be a worse and more dangerous position even than subjection. If we have our disadvantages, they are not greater than those under which other Churches are suffering; and so long as they are bearable, we must submit to them, in the hope that they will be removed or alleviated, when Church principles are better appreciated.

Nothing, in fact, is more difficult than to define the exact limits of union between Church and State. That the State should receive the Church as a Divine Ordinance for the ameliora-

tion and salvation of mankind, and cordially aid its ministry, is undeniable; and that Churchmen, on their part, should submit, as loyal subjects, to the laws of the State, remembering the Apostle's injunction to the early Church:—"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the King, as *supreme*; or unto Governors, as unto them that are sent by Him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God."¹ But the precise nature of the union seems to depend on the condition of the people amongst whom the Church is placed, and to be liable to modification and readjustment, according to change of circumstances.

Meanwhile, are we sure that, under existing circumstances, the Anglican Church could profitably exercise a greater power of self-government than she at present possesses? Are we sure that her present fettered condition is not a judicial infliction of Divine Providence for her sins, or a merciful restraint for her real advantage? Suppose our Convocation restored, and our most prominent men sent thither to deli-

¹ 1 Peter, xi., 13.

berate on Church affairs. Conceive some of our Exeter Hall orators, who have been accustomed to carry all before them by acclamation; or imagine the Editors of the Record, the Church Intelligencer, and the British Critic, or their respective partisans, met to consult together on the necessary changes in the Church. Even in the Upper House, it is possible to conceive very grave differences on subjects with regard to which it would be impossible for either party conscientiously to make any compromise; but, in the Lower House, it is much to be feared that disputes might spring up, which would shake the Church to her centre.

It may, therefore, well be doubted, whether the present suspension of Convocation, as an arena of debate, be not a Providential decree to preserve the integrity of the Church; whether, if the Convocation were suffered to meet with full powers of deliberation, it might not be guilty of some rash and ill-advised act, whereby the character of our Church might be greatly altered, perhaps endangered; and, therefore, whether it may not be more discreet, at present, to ask for no alteration; only that our present rules and formularies should be acted on. We

are, it is to be feared, in too unsettled a state to attempt to improve them. But it by no means follows, that, because the Convocation does not assemble for general purposes, therefore it should have no voice in ecclesiastical matters. Surely some plan might be devised whereby the concurrence of Convocation, in matters brought forward by the State, might be obtained, or its non-concurrence signified, without entering into all the disputed points of controversy which distract the age. The policy of suppressing a Bishopric might be sanctioned, or rejected, by Convocation, without provoking a discussion on Justification by Faith.

There is, amongst others, this serious evil in the absolute silencing of Convocation: that it may be doubted whether an Act of Parliament, with regard to so grave an alteration as the suppression of a Bishopric, has the force of law, without the concurrence of the Church. Certainly, it is entirely an act of might, and not of right; an instance of practical Erastianism which cannot be denied. The same may be said of the law of *præmunire*. It has in theory a very Erastian appearance, that our Bishops should be virtually appointed by the Minister

of the day, especially when we consider the influence by which Ministers acquire, or *may* acquire, their position. Yet, under the existing circumstances of the Church, it might be doubted whether a better choice would be made, if Bishoprics were really elective.

To set off against this interference, we have, it cannot be said, the protection of our property ; for the Church has been, on many occasions, pillaged by the State itself. However, certainly the State, generally speaking, prevents others from pillaging us. And so, to our alliance with her, we may ascribe the maintenance of our parochial system, and the means of affording the ordinances and instruction of the Church to the remotest districts of the land. Nor, when we feel disposed to lament over our various grievances, must we forget the great practical advantage of the true Church being the recognised religion of the land.

How many persons are there, who, though ignorant of the real claims of the Church as a Divine Ordinance, yet, from the analogous principle of obedience to human authority, submit to her instructions, and receive her ordinances. We cannot but thank God that multi-

tudes do thus derive the essential benefit of communion with the Church, though unaware of their actual position with regard to her. Our object should be gradually to infuse into them a knowledge of the true principles of Christ's kingdom, without weakening those ties by which they are at present bound.

CHAPTER VI.

OBJECTIONS AGAINST THE POSITION OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH. THE QUESTION OF UNITY CONSIDERED. THE MODERN OR VARIOUS-DENOMINATION SYSTEM: THE MEDIÆVAL SYSTEM, OR POPEDOM: THE PRIMITIVE OR APOSTOLIC SYSTEM.

FROM the former chapters of this book it will be seen that the Church of England claims to be the identical Church which was planted by Apostles or Apostolic men, acting under God's commission in this land; that it has preserved all the essentials of a true Church; and, therefore that it is the Divinely appointed channel to which all the inhabitants of this country should resort for the means of grace and salvation.

We must not, however, omit to consider the objections which have been made to this claim of the Church of England; and the rival theories set up against it by Dissenters on the one hand, and Romanists on the other.

As the main objection to the position of the English Church turns on the nature of *Church unity*, we will first institute an inquiry on this head.

That unity of some sort is the true condition of the Christian Church none can for a moment deny who regard the authority of Scripture. On the evening before the trial and crucifixion of our blessed Lord, He held, as we read in St. John's Gospel, a conversation with His chosen disciples, and among other important matters, he prayed earnestly to His Father in their behalf, and added these words, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe in Me through their word: *that they all may be one*; as Thou Father art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou has sent Me."¹ Again, the Apostle St. Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians says, "I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation with which ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love: endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one

¹ John xvii., 20, 21.

spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all; who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”¹ From these, and many other passages in Holy Scripture, it is abundantly manifest that the true position of the Church, in its healthy state, is, that it should be one and undivided, and that all schism or division is sinful and displeasing to God.

This view is still further confirmed, if confirmation be needful, by the conduct of the Apostles, and those after them, who first organized the Christian Church. The same faith was everywhere preached: the same discipline everywhere established. Those who began to form schisms, as in the case of the Corinthians, were severely rebuked. When a case of difficulty occurred it was referred to the general council of the Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem; and afterwards, on several occasions, general councils of all the Bishops of the Church were held for the suppression of heresy and maintenance of truth and unity.

It is but too evident that the primitive state of things no longer exists. By many persons

¹ Eph. iv., 1, 9.

the very meaning of unity is forgotten, as well as the means by which it is to be attained. The greater part of the world are apt to form their opinions from what they see before their eyes, without giving themselves the trouble to inquire further. Hence, in the present day, there are persons who maintain the strange paradox that the state of things existing amongst the various bodies of professing Christians, in this country, is compatible with Church unity. The theory of union held by these persons may be called *the various-denomination-system*. They consider that it is open to all persons to take the Sacred Volume, and form out of it a system for themselves, and that those who chance to agree together may adopt what mode of worship they choose, and appoint for themselves teachers who shall instruct them in the way in which they wish to be instructed. Thus there are often in the same town Wesleyans, Independents, Presbyterians, Quakers, and a variety of others; all these may differ from each other in doctrine, may refuse to hold communion with each other, may "contend earnestly," not as the Apostle commands, "for *the* faith," but each for his own particular faith. No matter whether

their doctrines have been pronounced heresies by the Church, still, if they fancy that they find them in Holy Scripture, they are at perfect liberty to maintain them ; and yet they shall all be united together by some secret invisible bond, and shall equally be members of the Church Catholic. This, it is seriously maintained, is the unity for which their Saviour prayed, and which the Apostles preached !

The mere statement of this system is sufficient to show its inconsistency. When tested by Scripture, it fails in every particular ; St. Paul distinctly declares that there is to be *one body*, as well as *one spirit*. Christian unity consists neither in unity of form or body, without corresponding unity of spirit ; nor in supposed unity of spirit, without unity of body ; but in unity of both. Again, there must be *one faith and one baptism*. It is not enough to be of one faith or common doctrine, but we must be joined together in sacramental union by one baptism. Again, a reason assigned by our Lord for the union of His followers was, that the world might believe that the Father had sent Him. The true union of Christians is a visible union, such as the world

may see and admire. It is utterly impossible, therefore, that the various-denomination-system, *i. e.*, a number of congregations in the same city or parish, holding a variety of different opinions, and not communicating or worshipping with each other,—should be Catholicism or Christian unity. Any thing more contrary to Scriptural unity, and to the system contemplated by Christ and His Apostles, or any thing more opposed to the practice of the Primitive Church, it is impossible to conceive.

The next view to be considered is *the Papal theory of Catholicism*,¹ which obtained in Europe during the middle ages, and is still held, though with much difference of opinion, in a considerable portion of the Western Church. The Papal theory is this: that the Bishop of Rome has been divinely appointed to be, in all ages, the centre of union to Christendom, a Bishop

¹ In this part of the subject I have adopted many of the arguments used by Leslie, in his "Case stated between the Churches of Rome and England;" and Bishop Jeremy Taylor, in his "Dissuasive from Popery;" as well as Mr. Palmer's "Treatise on the Church," to which books I beg to refer those who desire further information on the subject.

of Bishops, and the infallible head of the Church, in order to preserve the true faith, and maintain union amongst Christians to the end of time.

There is a boldness and simplicity in this theory which strikes the mind; and the deep and mysterious influence which, for several centuries, the Papal power held over the destinies of the world, is apt to fix itself on the imagination. The fallacy is, that the moral power of Christ's kingdom is confounded with the Popedom, which is a mere excrescence from it. The Papal power receives the praise of that Divine and holy influence, which is in truth the covenanted heirloom of the Christian Church. There is no sort of proof of the truth of the theory of an universal Bishopric; it rests solely on the assumption that what *has* been ought to be. We know from history, that after the establishment of Christianity in the greater part of the Christian world, the Bishopric of Rome began to stand forth among the rest, in consequence of its wealth, and zeal for the truth, and also in a great measure, from its being situated in the imperial city. Gradually a sort of precedence was yielded to it. The Bishop of Rome was

sometimes, though not always, the President of Councils ; and instances are on record, even in early times (though not in the earliest), in which the Bishops of other dioceses applied to him for counsel and advice. Afterwards, in consequence of grants of territory made by Pepin and Charlemagne, the Pope, or Bishop of Rome became a temporal monarch, whereby his rank and prominence were still further advanced ; and he came at length, by various means, to exercise a vast power both spiritual and temporal. But that this power was rightly assumed, that the Pope had any Divine authority, or commission, to be the head of Christendom, and that it has been productive of those benefits for which it was assumed to be established, is wholly incapable of proof. On the contrary, it is easy to shew, first, that the supremacy of an individual was most unlikely, humanly speaking, to preserve a true Christian unity ; secondly, that there is no evidence, either from Scripture, or primitive antiquity, that the Bishop of Rome was divinely appointed to be the head of the Church, or centre of unity ; thirdly, that the unwarrantable claim of the Pope has been, and still is, most injurious, in many ways, to the Church.

The advocates of the Papacy assert, that it was the will of God that unity should be preserved, and that the institution of the Popedom was the best mode of ensuring union, and, therefore, that the Popedom was of Divine authority.

But, surely, it is presumptuous in us to judge what is the best instrument in God's hand to effect His purposes. We may think it most conducive to unity that there should be an infallible guide, a living oracle, an absolute, ultimate authority, to whom we might always resort ; but we must consider, not what we think, but what God has appointed.

Again, though it is true that, if all men would yield their judgment to the Bishop of Rome, external unity, in some sense, would be maintained, yet it is highly improbable that *Christian* unity, or unity *in truth*, would be preserved, by submitting the judgment to a single Bishop, in each age, a succession of men of like passions with ourselves. How can infallibility reside in fallible man ? How utterly improbable is it that a succession of individual Bishops should judge, in all cases, according to the truth, without a constant miracle ; and that they have been miraculously aided is a pure assumption,

without even a shade of evidence. There is not the slightest proof to show that the Bishop of Rome is not as likely to err as any other Bishop in Christendom.

Secondly, the doctrine of the Pope being the head of the Church, and centre of union, rests on no warrant of Scripture, or Christian antiquity. The notion that St. Peter was superior in order to the rest of the Apostles, or that that superiority of order was continued to the Bishop of Rome, is perfectly gratuitous. St. Peter was prominent by his zeal, and perhaps by his age ; but we find no authority given him which was not given to the rest. Our Lord said, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church."¹ So also Holy Scripture says that it is "*built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets*, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone."² So that the Church is built on the rest of the Apostles, as well as on Peter. Our Lord said to St. Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of heaven and hell, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."³ But He said also to

¹ Mat. xvi., 18.

² Eph. xi., 20.

³ Mat. xvi., 19.

the rest of the Apostles, "Whose soever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain they are retained."¹ Our Lord bade Peter "feed the sheep," but what was there in this distinct from the authority and function of the rest? On the other hand, we know that our Lord sharply rebuked his disciples for seeking to be accounted greater one than another.²

Evidently, therefore, whatsoever distinction Peter had, was purely personal. He had no pre-eminence of office, and, consequently, no such pre-eminence could be derived from him. Read only the history of the first council of the Church, held at Jerusalem, in which St. Peter merely delivers his single opinion, like Paul and Barnabas. It is St. James who declares the sentence of the council, as president.³

If we search uninspired history, we find no evidence at all, in the primitive ages, of any inherent power of Divine authority possessed by the Bishop of Rome beyond the other Bishops of the Church. If the Pope of Rome was sometimes referred to, on account of his high station, to decide differences, so also were the

¹ John xx., 23.

² Luke xxii., 24.

³ Acts xv.

Bishops or Popes of Antioch and Jerusalem. If the judgment of the Bishop of Rome was sometimes followed, it was also sometimes rejected : it was not considered binding as by Divine authority. The Divine authority and infallibility of the Pope is merely a figment of the middle ages, and not received universally even then ; for we find his sentence in favour of the adoration of images flatly rejected by the Bishops of the Western Church, from Gaul, Aquitaine, Germany, and Italy, assembled at Frankfort, to the number of three hundred, in the year 794 ; and the whole Eastern Church, amounting to the half of Christendom, denied his authority altogether. So that neither Scripture nor tradition countenance the presumptuous claim of an universal Bishopric. Our Lord says that the gates of hell shall not prevail against His Church, and that He will be with His Apostles always, even unto the end of the world. Yes, but not through the instrumentality of the Papacy. The indefectibility of the Church is a very different thing from the infallibility of the Pope.

The difference of the argument for the Episcopacy and the Papacy deserves to be noted.

We trace Episcopacy upwards from the present time, step by step, through every age, to the time of the Apostles. We know for certain, that in every Church founded by them, Bishops were appointed, and in the Holy Scripture itself there are many evident tokens of the establishment of the Episcopacy. Therefore, we argue that it is the true form of the visible Church, established by Divine authority. But of the Papacy, there is no such evidence; for several centuries we find not the remotest allusion to it. In primitive times, while Bishops were found in every Church in Christendom, there is no evidence whatever of a Pope exercising dominion over them.

Having shewn that the Divine authority of the Pope is equally devoid of proof from tradition as from Scripture, we proceed to consider what have been the results of the authority which he has exercised. If it is shewn, as it may be, that these have been most prejudicial and disastrous to the cause of truth and unity, then a distinct argument is raised against the Pope's supremacy. The usual argument by which persons have been beguiled to the Church of Rome is this:—The Church of Rome asserts,

and has asserted for several centuries, that her authority is infallible ; therefore, whatsoever she says, whether apparently contrary to God's Word or not, must needs be true. This is surely the most futile argument imaginable. We have already shewn that, though she asserts herself to be infallible, she cannot prove it. It is also certain that, if she contradicts God's Word, she cannot be infallible. God's Word, when it speaks plainly, is of supreme authority. "The Church hath authority in *controversies* of faith."¹ It hath no authority to contradict the plain and positive language of God Himself, respecting which there can be no controversy. If God says "Thou shalt not steal," the Church may not say "Thou *shalt* steal." If God says "Thou shalt not worship nor bow down to images," the Church may not say "Thou *shalt*." If our Lord bids "all" His disciples drink of His blessed blood, the Church may not forbid them. Therefore, to show that the Romish Church has done many things contrary to the plain letter of Scripture, and has sanctioned many unscriptural acts, and, by the exercise of its assumed power, has been the cause of much

¹ See the 20th Article of our Church.

evil, is a strong evidence of its fallibility ; and, when taken in conjunction with the fact that its infallibility cannot be proved from Scripture or tradition, is conclusive.

The most flagrant instances in which the Church of Rome has sanctioned or allowed practices contrary to the plain Word of God are those, already adverted to, of image worship, adoration of saints, and the denial of the cup to the laity. A variety of minor instances might be mentioned, but these undeniable cases may be sufficient; and they are such as have greatly changed and corrupted the Christian religion, by leading persons to yield to created beings that worship and honour which is due only to the Infinite and Eternal God, the blessed and undivided Trinity; and by perverting the principal means of grace given to the Church, even the free participation in that sacred blood, which was shed for the remission of sins. It is only long use that can have obscured the eyes of members of the Romish Church to these palpable evils. But the prejudicial influence of the assumed power of Romish Bishops is evident in other ways. Many Popes have made the Church the instrument of their ambition and

extortion ; and the most odious practices have been tolerated by them, and even maintained by their sanction. Nor should it be forgotten, that in whatsoever country the authority of the Pope is still preserved, there image worship, prayers to saints, mutilated sacraments, and other corrupt and unscriptural practices, still remain unreformed. And since it is impossible that unity of the Church can be restored until these abuses are removed, it is clear that the Pope must either descend from his assumed infallibility, or the Churches under his rule must reform themselves, in spite of him.

Consider only the practical working of the Papal power. We see a Bishop, in whose appointment all sorts of intrigues are employed ; sometimes a man of notoriously scandalous life ; in many cases, ambitious, worldly, and mixed up with the secular politics of Europe ; a temporal prince too weak to maintain an independent kingdom, and obliged to lean on such support as he can best obtain by policy. Can we conceive a man so situated to be the centre of Divine truth, the infallible guide of Christendom ? Let us endeavour to picture to ourselves the manner in which, in any particular case, the

Pope would make up his judgment. For instance, in the case of the divorce of Henry VIII. from Catharine of Arragon. Is it too much to suppose him closetted with his private Secretary, and talking over the difficulties of the case — on the one hand, the need of keeping terms with the English monarch, the defender of the faith ; on the other hand, the fear of offending the Emperor : on the one side, Henry's obvious disposition to throw his power into the scale on the side of the Reformers ; on the other, the threats of Charles to summon a council ? Is it too much to suppose the perplexed and vacillating Pope, with the help of his Secretary, coming with difficulty to some conclusion, and preparing the draft of a bull ; when presently a courier arrives from one or other of the interested parties, and entirely alters the features of the case ? Does not history teach us, beyond a doubt, that, in a variety of instances, the Pope's decision on far more important questions has been made in some such way as this ? Contrast what we know from history of the character and conduct of many of the Popes with the inflated and arrogant style which they have assumed. The

following is a portion of the bull of Pope Pius V., issued against Queen Elizabeth :—

“ He that reigneth on high, to whom is given all power in heaven, and on earth, hath committed the one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, out of which there is no salvation, to one alone on earth, namely, to Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and to the Roman Pontiff, successor to Peter, to be governed with a plenitude of power; this one He hath constituted *prince over all nations*, and all kingdoms, that he might pluck up, destroy, dissipate, ruinate, plant, and build. . . . We, therefore, deprive the Queen of her pretended right to the kingdom [of England], and of all dominion, dignity, and privileges whatsoever; and *absolve* all the nobles, subjects, and people of the kingdom, and whoever else have sworn to her, *from their oaths, and all duty whatsoever*, in regard of dominion, fidelity, and obedience.”

Is it possible to conceive more pernicious results from more unwarrantable assumption?

Considering, therefore, the *a priori* improbability of a single individual being made the arbiter of the faith of Christendom; the entire want of evidence, *either in Scripture, or in early*

Church history, of any such appointment ; and, looking to the manner in which the Pope's power has been exercised, and its utter failure to produce that unity, for the sake of which it is supposed to have been instituted, it may, I think, safely be concluded, that the Popedom is not the centre of unity in the Christian Church.

Nay, so far from it, the very powers claimed and exercised by the Pope have been, in no small degree, the cause of schism. It was owing, in a great measure, to the arrogance of the Pope, that the division took place between the Eastern and Western Churches. The same cause gave birth to the estrangement between portions of the Western Church at the time of the Reformation. His avarice and extortion, his sanction of superstitions and abuses, disgusted the various nations which had long submitted to him ; while his supposed infallibility prevented him from agreeing to the necessary Reformation. It was time to inquire into the truth of his claim to infallibility ; and when no such power could be proved to exist, it became the duty of those Bishops, who had been made aware of the need of Reformation, to betake themselves to the amendment of abuses, and

appeal to the Word of God, and the practice of the primitive ages.

The *Papal system of Church unity*, which prevailed in the middle ages, as well as the *various-denominational, or modern dissenting system*, being shewn to be untenable, we proceed to inquire into the *system of the Apostles* and the early Christians.

There can be no doubt that, in the primitive ages, a perfect unity existed; and it was on this principle, as declared by St. Paul.—The Church, or household of faith, was “*built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone*, in Whom all the building, fitly framed together, grew into an holy temple unto the Lord, in Whom we also are builded together, for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”¹ This is the true system of the Christian Church. Christ is the head of His body, which is the Church, and is the true centre of unity, which is maintained *through the instrumentality of the Apostles*, and those by them sent forth to proclaim the Gospel of

¹ Eph. xi., 20, 21, 22.

Salvation. And gather in the nations into the fold. They were commissioned to preach, and to baptise. As many as believed were added to the Church by baptism. And, as men believed, new Churches were formed; the same doctrine was everywhere taught, and the same discipline everywhere established. Bishops and pastors were everywhere appointed over the new branches of the Church, who received their authority from the Apostles, and so from Christ, the head; their office being to maintain unity within their particular Churches, and to form the links whereby the different Churches were connected with their common centre of unity. That such was the system of the Primitive Church, we have the following remarkable testimony of St. Ignatius, the friend and disciple of St. Peter and St. John, addressed to the Ephesians, about seventy years after the death of our Lord:—

“Jesus Christ, our inseparable life, is the Mind of the Father; *like as the Bishops, appointed even unto the utmost bounds of the earth,* are after the Mind of Jesus Christ.

“Wherefore it will become you to concur in the mind of your Bishops, as also ye do. For your fa-

mous Presbytery, worthy of God, is knit as closely to its Bishop, as the strings to a harp. Therefore, *by your unanimity and harmonious love*, Jesus Christ is sung, and each of you taketh part in the chorus; that so, being attuned together in one mind, and taking up the song of God, ye may, with one voice, and in perfect unity, sing to the Father by Jesus Christ; to the end that, by this means, He may both have you, and perceive, by your works, *that ye are indeed the members of His Son*. Wherefore it is profitable for you to live in blameless unity, that so ye may always have fellowship with God.

“For if I, in this little time, have held such communion with your Bishop—I mean not earthly, but spiritual—how much more must I think you blessed, who are so joined to him as the Church is to Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ to the Father; that so all things may agree in the same unity? Let no man deceive himself; if a man be not within the Altar, he faileth of the Bread of God. For if the prayers of one or two be of such force, as we are told, how much more that of the Bishop and the whole Church? *He, therefore, that does not come into*

the same place with it, is proud, and hath already condemned himself; for it is written, 'God resisteth the proud.' Let us take heed, therefore, that we do not set ourselves against the Bishop, that we may be set under God."

Such is the testimony of St. Ignatius to the principle of Apostolic or Episcopal unity.

There was not a Church without a Bishop, receiving Divine grace and authority from the Apostles, and dispensing and transmitting it around and onward. The Christian Churches are as rays from one common centre, or branches from one common stem; Christ is the true vine, we are its branches; Christ is the sun of the system, we its rays. Each Church which continues in "the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship," is a branch from Christ, its stem and head. Thus a visible identity is maintained by the Apostolic or Episcopal succession, whereby we have fellowship with the Apostles, and so with Christ, the head. By the same succession of Ministers, the Church is continually propagated amongst the heathens, and new branches are formed, just as a tree each year puts forth fresh shoots. This reception and transmission of the Divine grace and au-

thority, through the means of the Apostles and their successors, the Bishops, is as perfect and real in the remotest district, and will be in the most distant ages, as it was in the days of the Apostles. Time and space affect it not. The English Church being an emanation from Christ, and his Apostles, and continuing in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, is, so to speak, as close to Christ as it was when our forefathers were first gathered into His kingdom. And being thus joined to Christ, *we are in union also with all Churches of every age and place, which are in union with Him.* We are as truly in union with a branch of the Church dwelling at the Antipodes, as our different Dioceses in England are in union with each other. We are as closely joined to those which existed a thousand years ago, as to those which exist on earth at the present time. Nay, with all those that are gathered into the Church triumphant in the heaven, with the departed saints and martyrs, and the spirits of the just made perfect, our union is the same.

Surely this is a nobler, and truer, and more Scriptural theory of Church unity than the supposed necessity of union with a particular Bishop. Every Bishop, indeed, is a centre of

unity with which every other Bishop should be in union. There is no more necessity that our Bishops should be in union with the Pope, than that he and the Italian Bishops should be in union with our English Metropolitan. The obligation is just the same with all. We acknowledge no human being as our Lord, and none has a right to call himself master. There is no head of the Church but Jesus Christ, the Lord; if we are joined with Him, we are safe.

It is a false and faithless view of the Church to look only at the existing state of Christendom, and, when we see its schisms and heresies, to suppose that unity is departed, and is nowhere to be found. Most lamentable, indeed, it is, that all existing branches of the Church upon earth are not cordially united in intercommunion with each other, and do not all speak the same thing, and communicate their respective advantages, and mutually remedy each others faults. Most happy would it be if we could restore the intercourse of the primitive ages, when the whole Church, represented by its Bishops, could meet together, and consult for the welfare of Christ's Kingdom. Let us not despair that God may yet restore the spirit of love and charity amongst us. Still, it does not

follow that the want of actual intercommunion between Churches should destroy their common Apostolic union with Christ, their head. The prayer which our Lord uttered for the unity of His disciples, was not a promise or a prophecy. Its accomplishment depended on ourselves. When intercommunion between Apostolic Churches does not exist, there no doubt must be great fault on one side, if not on both. Yet, as the rays of the sun, though intercepted and divided, still shoot from one common centre, and as the branches of a tree spring from one common stem, without being interlaced and twined one with another; so may the different branches of the Church Catholic, though estranged for a time from each other, all centre in Christ, their head; and deriving from Him their spiritual grace, transmitted, through his Divinely-appointed Ministry, remain vitally and essentially one.

This estrangement between different branches of the Apostolic Churches is a very different thing from schism in the same Church. Nothing can justify individuals in deserting the communion of the Church in which God has placed them, but the failure of that Church to main-

tain its union with Christ, or to afford the means of salvation to the people. And such a failure is not to be laid to the charge of the Church of England. She stands the representative of the Church first planted on these shores by the Apostles, or their successors. She maintains her continuity with them by lineal descent. She has reformed her doctrine on the model of Scripture and the primitive ages; therefore, in all respects, she is as truly the Divinely-appointed dispenser of the means of grace to the people of this land, as if all her Bishops had received their commission from the hands of St. Paul himself. On this ground, she claims the allegiance of all the people whom God has placed within the limits of her jurisdiction; and denies the right of any within her dioceses to set up rival altars, or independent places of worship, under pain of the guilt of schism. On the same grounds of her Apostolicity and Orthodoxy, she claims union with all Churches, of whatsoever age or country, who still remain in the "Apostles' doctrine and fellowship." This she believes to be the true unity of the Church,—unity within herself,

union with every other Apostolic Church;
and union with Christ, the Head, and Bishop
of all the Churches.

CHAPTER VII.

OBJECTIONS CONTINUED : THE ENGLISH REFORMATION DEFENDED : WHO ARE THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE THEOLOGY OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH ?

A DUE consideration of the foregoing argument will greatly aid us in repelling the attacks both of the Romanist and Dissenter, against the position of the English Church. Resting on our conformity to Scripture and primitive antiquity, we maintain a position which is impregnable.

The principal point of attack from the Romanist is our Reformation. The thoroughgoing Romanist maintains that there was no need of Reformation, that no abuses really existed. With opponents of this sort, it is useless to argue, though it is necessary to argue

against them. When a man has brought himself to believe, that to make a graven image, and set it up in a church, and kneel before it, and say prayers in that position, is not contrary to the Second Commandment;¹ or that, if three places contend that they possess the skull of St. James, two at least must not be mistaken; or that denying the laity the blessed privilege of partaking of the Sacrament of the blood of Christ, is not contrary to our Lord's command; and that no blame attaches to the Pope, for the various impostures and superstitions which he has encouraged and maintained; when a man has brought himself to such a state of confidence in the Romish Church, as to believe it rather than the Word of God Himself, all argument with *him* seems thrown away. We must be

¹ The following is a translation of part of the hymn,

"*Ave, Maris Stella* :—

Hail, Star of the Sea;
 Hail, Mother of God.
 • • •
 Loose the chains of the guilty;
 Bring forth light to the blind;
 Drive away our evils.
 • • •
 Us, freed from guilt,
 Make gentle and chaste;
 Give us a pure life;
 Prepare a safe journey.

Who will say that a person, kneeling before the image of the Blessed Virgin, and using in his prayers expressions like these, is not breaking the Second Commandment?

contented to let him remain in his opinion. It is really remarkable with what affected confidence many eminent Romanists will defend the worshipping of images, and praying to saints, and the indignation which they express at the very notion of educated men, in the nineteenth century, being guilty of idolatry. "How can you bring against us this most odious accusation?" they say, "Do you know that idolatry is the most frightful charge that can be laid to the score of any Christian? Do you suppose that such persons as we, learned and intelligent men, occupying a prominent place in the present enlightened age, can be so besotted as to worship the wood and stone of which the image is made?" This is the tone commonly adopted by educated Romanists.

We answer, first, that the charge of idolatry is not more odious than that of heresy, of which you unsparingly accuse others. Secondly, that idolatry does not consist only in worshipping the actual wood and stone; that is only one sort of idolatry of which few probably are guilty. But *idolatry is the paying to the creature any portion or semblance of that honour, which is due to the Creator.* What we accuse you of, is the

daring to set up an image and bow down to it, and to say prayers to the blessed Virgin, and other Saints, in opposition to the positive and peremptory command of God. We accuse you of placing a stumbling block in the way of the ignorant, who are quite unable to understand the nice distinctions which you make between your "latria" and "dulia;" and many of whom there can be no doubt, kneel down before the images in their churches, with precisely the same feeling as did the Gentile and Jewish idolaters. We accuse you of encouraging the degrading superstition by your connivance. And be not so sure that you yourselves do not incur the penalty of idolatry. It was by "professing themselves to be wise" that the learned heathens "became foolish," and fell into the folly of worshipping the creature more than the Creator. And if King Solomon himself was beguiled into idolatry, who are ye that ye should so proudly consider yourselves exempt from the possibility of such weakness?*

* Romanists fancy that they stand excused from the charge of idolatry, because the Council of Trent declares that due honour and veneration is to be paid to images, *not* because there is in them any Divinity or virtue, or because

However, the majority of Romanists admit that great abuses have existed in their Church. The Popes themselves before the Reformation, nay, the Council of Trent allowed that there were many things which required amendment. But then it is contended by the advocates of the Papacy, that whether there were abuses or not, the Anglican Reformation was wrong; for that it was not competent for a small number of Bishops constituting a National Church, to take upon themselves to correct them. The proper

any trust is to be placed in *them*; but because the honour which is given them, is referred to the prototypes, which they represent, so that by the images which they kiss, and before whom they uncover the head and prostrate themselves, they adore Christ, and venerate the Saints. (See Conc. Trident, Sess. xxv.) But, besides that ignorant persons are incapable of making these distinctions, might not the same excuse serve for almost all idolaters? Some, indeed, may worship the actual wood and stone, but most of them only bow down *before* the idol as the representative of an unseen Deity. This is proved by the fact that there are many idols of one God. The Roman did not worship each idol of Jupiter in itself, but referred the honour to one "prototype"—one ruler of Heaven. When Moses upbraided the Israelitish idolaters, they might have replied in the spirit, and almost in the language of the Council of Trent, that they did not worship the molten gold of which the calf was made, but the invisible God whom it represented.

mode of proceeding, if there really was need of reformation, was for the Pope, or the General Council to have taken cognizance of the fact, and to have reformed what was amiss.

Now it must, of course, be admitted, that it would have been far better if the whole Church had simultaneously reformed itself, rather than only a part of it. Had the Pope summoned a Council of all the different Bishops, and made a searching inquiry into abuses, and effectually removed them, all the heart-burnings and schisms which have since vexed the Church, might have been in a great measure avoided. But the misfortune is, that he did not do so; but rather encouraged and maintained abuses. The corruptions which called forth the zeal of the Reformers, had been beyond question encouraged by the Roman Pontiff, and every effort was made to suppress the movement. When at length it became too powerful to be resisted, then, when it was too late, the Council of Trent was summoned; and what, after all, was the result of their protracted discussion? Why, that the corruptions were touched so lightly, that in the Churches which submitted to the Pope and received the decrees of Trent, the

abuses continued, *and have remained with scarcely any abatement ever since up to the present time.* Bowing down to images; prayers to the blessed Virgin; together with various palpable impostures and superstitions, are as rife as ever in the Churches of the Romish Communion.

Whether the English Bishops were divinely guided by a special Providence, or whatever was the cause, it can surely not be argued with truth that they were premature in their movement. Had they waited until the Pope and General Council reformed the abuses of the Church, it is manifest that we should have been bowing down to images, and offering prayers to Saints at the present day.

It is objected to this view that a dangerous precedent was introduced, that if the English Bishops might reform their Church, and expect obedience to their injunctions, any other Bishops, and these possibly heretics, may do the same. To this it is answered, that the example of a National Synod removing abuses, with strict regard to Scripture and the primitive faith and practice, is no warrant for other Bishops remodelling their Church on an heretical basis.

And if in reply it is urged that the English Bishops did not conform to the primitive practice in all respects, but removed from the Liturgy some portions which are invariably found in the ancient formularies; to this we answer, that the English Bishops removed those portions on account of the superstitious use of them which had become prevalent. And that even if some may think that they acted unadvisedly, in this step, still it was but a small error in comparison with the good which they effected. It is not pretended that every act of the Reformers was right, but that it was necessary for them to correct the abuses of the Church, and that, in the main, they were guided by a Divine Providence to follow Scripture and Primitive Antiquity.

When, therefore, we are asked, as we sometimes are, what is the theory of the Reformation of the English Church, we answer, that our theory is not that any set of Bishops, constituting a National Church, may, according to their own will and pleasure, make what changes they choose in the Churches over which they preside; but that, in a time of great corruption, when there is no prospect of the removal of

abuses by a general council and agreement of the whole Church, then it is the duty of a National Synod to correct such corruptions as are contrary to the plain letter of Holy Scripture, or the practice of the primitive and Apostolic ages. This may be called either a principle or a necessary exception to a principle. It applies as a precedent only to precisely similar cases.

But, secondly, it is objected by the Romanists, that the English Reformation was the work of unholy men, guided by unlawful passions, as lust, covetousness, time-serving policy, and the like; and, therefore, that the work itself is unholy. But this is no valid objection against the work itself; for how many instances have we of God working out the designs of His good providence by the means of wicked agents; Pharaoh, Balaam, Jehu, Nebuchadnezzar, Herod, were all unholy men, and yet were instruments in the hands of God. So might, therefore, Henry VIII. and Somerset have been. Unholy men are generally the agents in all violent changes and revolutions. Had the counter-revolution in Mary's time, been established, the Romanists would not have called it an unholy work; and

yet few would be hardy enough to assert that Philip and Mary were better rulers than Edward and Elizabeth ; or that Bonner, Gardiner, and Pole, were sincerer Christians than Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer.

But, then, it is contended by the enemies of the Reformation, that the Church should have been left to reform herself, and that the interference of the State marred the good work. It is however, very much to be doubted whether the Church either could or would have reformed herself, without the aid of the State. When we see that, in every single country where the authority of the Pope is recognised, there still remain the abuses of saint-worship and idolatry, have we not reason to bless God that, through His decrees, the power of the Pope was, at an early period, so crippled in this nation, that he was unable to resist the tide of Reformation. If the Reformation of the Church was right and necessary, as we have shewn it to have been, it was no less so, though accomplished in part by questionable means, however much we may regret that such means were used, and however much the use of such means may have impaired the good work. We may be displeased that

images were torn down from Churches by violent and irreverent men, yet we cannot be sorry for their removal, still less desire to restore them. We may regret that the evil passions of a sovereign, rather than the calm decision of our lawful Bishops, were instrumental in throwing off the Pope's unjust and pernicious authority, yet we may thank God for its removal, nevertheless; and firmly resolve never again to submit to what has once proved so detrimental to the cause of truth.

It is argued, further, that the results of the Reformation have been disastrous—that it introduced a torrent of irreverence, insubordination, covetousness, and immorality; that men grew much worse than they had been, and that, even at the present time, Protestant England is more immoral, licentious, and ungovernable, than Roman Catholic countries. No one can too deeply lament that the charge of irreverence and insubordination is undeniable; but the truth is, that this irreverence, which has overspread us, was the natural reaction from the former superstition; the insubordination, and the contempt of ecclesiastical authority, was the consequence of the Reformation being opposed

by that authority which should have promoted it. Had the Pope concurred, as he ought, in the movement, those results would have been avoided. Therefore, the guilt is in a great measure attributable to others. We are to this day suffering from the prejudice against Church authority, caused originally by the overweening tyranny of Rome, and her refusal to concur in the necessary work of Reformation. There is still the prevalent impression that ecclesiastical rulers are the abettors of corruption and abuses ; nor is this feeling likely to be removed, until the Church of Rome shews itself willing to correct the palpable abuses which abound in the Churches of her Communion.

As to the assertion that England, with its Reformed Church, is more vicious and immoral than those nations which are in the Roman Communion, the fact is directly contradicted by the statistics of crime and immorality in various countries. Incredible and shocking as it may appear, when we view the lamentable state of our own people, yet it is an established fact, that the population of France, Spain, and Italy, are in a still worse condition ; witness only the atrocities of the French and Spanish revolutions. Nor

will it, I think, be denied, that, in the upper and middle classes of England, there is more decency of conduct and general morality, than in the corresponding classes of Roman Catholic countries; certainly that there is less apparent infidelity and atheism. With so much to deplore amongst ourselves, it is painful to think that others are worse; but, such I fear, is the lamentable fact. Whether, therefore, we compare the acknowledged formularies of our Reformed Church, with the acknowledged formularies of Rome; or whether we look to the actual operation of the two systems, as shewn in the moral condition of the people subject to the two Churches respectively, we shall come to the conclusion that, if there is much to be lamented in the condition of the English Church and nation, *it would be no change for the better to return to the theory and practice of Rome.*

Before leaving this subject, I will take the opportunity of adverting to a false assumption which has been made by some writers, namely, that the character of the English Reformation, and, by inference, of the Anglican Church itself, is to be judged of by the expressed views and

opinions of those who were most prominent in the Reformation of the sixteenth century. This, if we consider for a moment, is manifestly an incorrect opinion. There was a bold and active party which urged on the movement, and, had they been allowed, would have gone to the extreme lengths of the Continental Reformers, and, perhaps, have destroyed the Church; but, at the same time, the mass of English Churchmen, of that period, rejected their ill-advised attempts at further change, and formed a conservative body, which served as a drag on the more impetuous spirits. This more sound and judicious class of men, though less conspicuous at the time, have, in reality, left a more decided impress of their views on the English Church, than the more prominent Reformers. To the latter we are indebted, generally speaking, for the changes that were made; to the former for what remained unaltered; to the one for the addition of the Articles; to the other for the preservation of the Liturgy. Hence, it is an erroneous view to take the opinion of the most active Reformers as indicating the character of the English Church. *They represent only one party, whereas our Prayer Book was the work of both.*

Nor is it all derogatory to the real merits of the Reformers, to assign them their true position. Many of them, beyond question, were able and conscientious men ; they performed the work whereunto God had appointed them. They laid down their lives in the cause which they maintained. We honour them for their exertions, and revere them for their sufferings. But when it is attempted to set them up as fathers and founders of the English Church, which had existed more than a thousand years before their birth ; and when it is boldly proclaimed that their views and opinions are to be taken as interpreters of our formularies, then it is necessary to remind those who make for them these unwarrantable claims, that the Reformers were not exempt from the common failings of humanity ; that, in pursuing the course marked out for them by the circumstances of the times, some of them exceeded the limits of sound discretion, and went beyond that moderation which is the just boast of the English Church ; and that the true representatives of our Theology are not only, or even principally, the Reformers of the sixteenth century, who acted and wrote in the midst of

change and unsettled opinions, but that body of grave, pious, and eminent Divines, whom, in different ages, God's providence has raised up amongst us, to maintain the cause of truth.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE OBJECTIONS OF DISSENTERS.

THE principal objection urged by the Dissenters against the Anglo-Catholic Church is, that it is established by law.

Now, the Churchman does not care to answer this objection. He might indeed urge many very good reasons why it is desirable that the Church, in any nation, should act in unison with the State. He might insist on the manifest duty of every ruler or statesman to use the power which he possessed in furtherance of that which he believed to be the true Church of God. He might allege many arguments to prove that both Church and State reap great advantage from a well-arranged union; the Church in the compa-

relative security of its endowment, and the opportunity which it thereby possesses of spreading the Gospel in many districts, where, but for the assistance of the State, the name of Christ would be unknown; the State, in the powerful aid which it derives from the Church for the suppression of crime, and the promotion of order and morality. These are sufficiently strong arguments for the general principle of an establishment. The terms of the union are, of course, open to discussion. It is very possible the Church may be cramped in her efficiency, or treated with over much jealousy by her ally. Then let these objections be removed. They are mere objections of detail. They do not affect the general principle of an establishment.

However, the Anglo-Catholic Churchman does not much concern himself to argue the question of an establishment. That is more the business of the politician. The State would fare far worse without the Church, than the Church without the State. The argument of the man of religion is simply this,—that his Church is the Church planted by the providence of God in England, and that it remains the true Church, whether it be established or

unestablished. So long as it maintains the doctrine and discipline of the Apostles, and affords the means of grace to the inhabitants of the land, so long it claims their obedience and adherence, under pain of the guilt of schism ; and it makes not the slightest difference whether it be established or persecuted ; whether kings are its nursing fathers, and queens its nursing mothers ; or whether it be like its Divine Master, depressed and despised. It is still the Divinely-appointed instrument of God, to convey to us the means of grace, and gather into His Kingdom such as shall be saved.

Besides this main objection, Dissenters have other minor arguments which they urge. Generally, they think the Reformation was not carried far enough ; that not only Popes but Bishops also should have been abolished ; that it was not enough to discontinue chasubles, albs, and rochets, but that surplices are a crying abomination and rag of Antichrist ; that it is improper to sign children with the sign of the cross, and that to sit or stand is more fitting than to kneel, at the time of receiving the Holy Communion.

Now, with regard to Episcopacy, we contend that the institution is so ancient, and so perfectly

in accordance with holy Scripture that there is every reason to believe that it is of Divine authority. But even supposing, though without for a moment granting, that no Divine grace is conveyed by the Episcopate, and that the form of government is unessential—still we say it is sinful in Dissenters to cause a schism in the Church on account of what is indifferent. The Universal Church had been notoriously governed by Bishops up to the time of the Reformation. The Church of England thought proper to retain that form of government; and even to those who deem it not to be of Divine origin, it furnishes no excuse to separate themselves from the Church of their country.

The other objections are matters of detail. The Anglo-Catholic thinks that there are good reasons for the particular arrangements made; that a surplice is a very decent garment for a Priest to officiate in; that the sign of the cross in baptism is both edifying and becoming, and so with regard to the rest of our rites and formularies. But were it possible that they might be advantageously changed, still he contends that there is nothing in them to which such objections can be proved, as to warrant any one in

taking the fearful step of separation from the communion of the faithful.

But these points have been so much discussed of late that it is needless to pursue them further.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PRACTICAL DEFECTS OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH.

I. THE NEGLECT OF ITS OWN RULES.

It has been maintained in the foregoing pages that the Anglo-Catholic Church is not only a true Church, enjoying the true Succession, the Scriptures, the Sacraments, and the ancient Creeds, but also that its formularies are well adapted to provide for the pure worship of God and the edification of the people; assuming, as we have done all along, that the doctrines of the Church are such as we find in her authorized Book of Common Prayer.

But it cannot be denied that, as before the Reformation so now again, great practical corruptions have been suffered to creep in amongst us. *The principal fault in the Anglican Church*

is the almost universal neglect of her own rules and formularies.

It is not, as at the time of the Reformation, that our formularies themselves have become corrupted and need revision; our formularies are good, but we have departed from them.

We have a grave, severe, and solemn ritual which, if strictly followed, and cordially joined in, is well suited to our wants. Opinions may differ as to the exact propriety of every portion of its arrangement. Some may desire a ceremonial more in accordance with the gorgeousness of Rome; others may wish the Anglican ritual even more simplified than it is. Yet none can prove against it any serious fault, and the majority of English Churchmen are wont to congratulate themselves on its excellence, and speak with something like enthusiasm of their Scriptural and time-honoured Liturgy.

Why then do we not conform to it? How inconsistent to praise while we neglect it.

A strange and novel doctrine has been lately promulgated that literal conformity to the directions of our Church is not required; that though each Minister solemnly pledges himself to adhere to the written formularies of the Church

and those alone, yet he is at liberty to accommodate himself to the practice of the age, and the whims of his particular congregation.

This is a striking instance of the prevailing laxity of the present day with regard to the most solemn oaths and declarations. There is not an oath or a declaration, which may not be set aside, or indeed which *is* not set aside on this principle.

But in truth this accommodation to circumstances renders our book of formularies a dead letter. We have no certain rule to go by. If we are to accommodate one congregation in one deviation from the prescribed order, others will expect similar concession in other points. If we yield to one alteration, because it has become habitual in this generation, still further alteration will be made in the next. Thus the oaths of Ministers stand for nothing; the integrity of our formularies is destroyed; our Church unity is nominal.

Some, indeed, say that the alterations are too unimportant to need that they should be complained of.

I much mistake if many who are accustomed to avail themselves of this plea do not consider

them to be more important than they choose to allow, and adopt the alteration, just because, in these points, their private opinions are at variance with the Church. However, a very slight consideration will shew, that the alterations, arbitrarily made in our Church Service, are neither few nor unimportant.

First, the entire omission of the public worship of God on six days out of seven. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the Anglican Church intends to afford her members the opportunity of daily serving God. But this requirement has been so generally neglected, that it has come to be thought both by clergy and people, a burden instead of a privilege and duty.

Secondly, the neglect to observe the Fasts and Festivals, and, consequently, an entire ignorance on the part of many congregations that the observance of any festivals is required, or that there is such a duty in existence as fasting.

Thirdly, the disuse of Public Baptism; so that many persons never hear that service performed during their lives, and know nothing of the doctrine therein contained.

Fourthly, the neglect to Catechise the Children in public.

Fifthly, the entire omission of the Offertory.

These are positive omissions in important matters of what is distinctly enjoined, not to mention many minor examples; as, for instance, omission of prayer appointed for the Ember Days, and the neglect of rubricks in the administration of the Lord's Supper.

But, besides these, there are other things to be complained of, as the infrequency of the administration of the Holy Communion in many places; the introduction of unauthorised hymns containing unsound doctrines; the systematic omission, in the pulpit, of many important doctrines; and even the positive introduction of doctrines directly contrary to those of the Church. Add to these the neglect of all order and propriety in the arrangement of many of our churches; the physical difficulties interposed in the way of Christian worship, where everything is arranged for preaching; the want even of places to kneel on; so that people could not properly worship, if they would.

These practices have materially changed the character of the Church, and a new system has been gradually introduced—a system very dif-

ferent in general character from that prescribed in the Anglican Prayer Book.

Let us consider more in detail the effects of some of the arbitrary alterations which have been suffered to intrude, of late years, into the Church Service.

It is manifest that the systematic neglect of daily worship must very greatly affect the whole tone and temper of a population. No one having a grain of faith will deny that daily prayer, even of a few faithful men in behalf of the rest, must have a very great influence for good in procuring God's blessing on the Church at large; and, also, by keeping those, who avail themselves of it, in a reverent and holy frame; while the neglect may of itself account for the almost universal worldliness and ungodliness which abounds amongst us.

It cannot be contended that daily worship is impracticable, because there is no doubt that it was used in the English Church formerly, and is so still in foreign countries; and because, in several places in England, it has lately been revived, and men of all classes have been found to join in it. How many persons might, by merely rising an hour earlier, or by taking an hour from

some all-engrossing occupation of the world, secure this great privilege, and thereby avail themselves of a means eminently calculated to save them from worldliness and ungodliness.

Next, as regards Holy Baptism, which the Church directs, "shall be administered on Sundays, and other Holy days, when the most people come together; as well for that the congregation then present may testify the receiving of them that be newly baptised into the number of Christ's Church; as also, because in the Baptism of Infants, every man present may be put in mind of his own profession made to God in his Baptism."¹ It cannot be doubted that, if this order of the Church were attended to, very great good would be likely to result. We should be continually reminded of the sacred vows by which we are bound; and we should hear what the true doctrine concerning Baptism really is. But, from strange inadvertence, or, possibly, from deliberate design, this order of the Church has fallen into almost universal neglect. And what is the result? Not only are congregations never put in mind of their

¹ See the Rubrick, at the beginning of the Baptismal Service.

baptismal vows, but a very general ignorance has grown up concerning the doctrine of Baptism; which St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews,¹ enumerates amongst the principles, or foundation, of our faith, and the doctrine of the Church, as contained in her Baptismal Service, is absolutely looked on as a novelty.

The utter neglect of Fasting cannot but have the most prejudicial effect, both on individuals and on the Church at large. Of all ordinances, perhaps, this is the most necessary for a luxuriant, self-indulgent age like the present. Yet, owing to the neglect of the Church's rules, the duty of fasting is positively unknown to many persons. They will not believe you, if you tell them that the Church to which they belong requires it of them. It is fearful to think how much *they* will have to answer for, who wilfully or carelessly have kept back from the people this most valuable and important means of grace.

Consider, again, the effect of the non-observance of Ember Days, and the neglect of prayer for those about to be ordained. Not only are these persons deprived, in the time of their

¹ Heb. vi., 2.

greatest need, of the prayers of the people, but so great an ignorance is spread abroad, that the nature and necessity of ordination is well nigh forgotten; and persons, as it is well known, have taken upon themselves to officiate in sacred things, and even to administer the Holy Sacraments, without having received the Divine commission, and in entire ignorance of their sin and danger; insomuch, that, if reminded of it, they express great indignation. So completely do important truths vanish from the minds of men, if the proper means devised by the Church to preserve them are neglected.

Lastly, with regard to the Offertory; the directions given in the Prayer Book respecting it are as plain and peremptory as they can be. It is scarcely necessary to remark, that this part of the service is almost universally disused. The consequence is a most lamentable decay of Christian charity. The charity of the early Church, the munificence of the Middle Ages, have passed away; a prevailing forgetfulness of the duty of making offerings for God's service, has supervened; and, consequently, a most grievous neglect of proper provision for the ordinances of religion to meet the wants of the

people ; and an influx of heathenism, which, now that it has become too alarming and too obvious to be disregarded, we seek to remedy by the most irreverent and ridiculous devices ; scraping money together by appeals to the vanity and luxury of the people, instead of falling back on that grave and edifying ordinance provided and enjoined by our Church.

In a word, the influence of our Church system, its beauty and holiness, nay, its very existence is in jeopardy, *by the systematic neglect of her own rules.* In theory, they are admirably well adapted to our wants, well calculated to keep alive the spirit of piety ; but, by the faithlessness of past generations, and the wilfulness of the present, our Church is denuded of many of her most valuable attributes, and clipped down as nearly as possible to the standard of the conventicle. And so inveterate have these abuses become, that he who ventures to cry out against them, and warn men of the sin and absurdity of neglecting their own principles, is looked on as an innovator and disturber of the peace ; and the obstinate defier of the Church's rules, is reputed to be the consistent Churchman.

However, the abuses and corruptions of the

English Church are beginning to totter, and it needs, we trust, but a little more perseverance to restore her to something like her real beauty and holiness.

CHAPTER X.

PRACTICAL DEFECTS OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH : ITS WANT OF DISCIPLINE GENERALLY

THE next practical grievance of the Church of England, and, in fact, that to which the former may be attributed, is its *Want of Discipline*.

The word discipline is used in two senses,—first, *generally*, as the power to preserve union, order, and obedience in the Church; secondly, with a more *specific* application to the “godly discipline” of penance, alluded to in the Service for Ash Wednesday. At present I wish to speak of the general subject of discipline, or preservation of order.

In this respect, it must be confessed that the English Church is sadly deficient,—not in theory,

but in practice. There is no want of discipline and obedience in theory. Each Bishop, at his consecration, promises,—“ In the Name of God, Amen. I, N, chosen Bishop of the Church and See of N, do profess and promise all due reverence and obedience to the Archbishop, and to the Metropolitan Church of N, and to their successors. — So help me God, through Jesus Christ.” Afterwards, the Archbishop demands of the Bishop-elect,—“ Will you maintain and set forward, as much as shall lie in you, quietness, love, and peace among all men ; and such as be unquiet and disobedient, and criminous, within your diocese, correct and punish, according to such authority as you have by God’s Word, and as to you shall be committed by the ordinance of this realm ?”

To which the Bishop gives answer, “ I will do so, by the help of God.”

Again, it is demanded of each Priest, at his ordination :

“ Will you give your faithful diligence always so to minister the Doctrine, and Sacraments, and the Discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church and Realm hath received the same, according to the Command-

ments of God ; so that you may teach the people committed to your care, and charge with all diligence to keep and observe the same ?”

Answer: “I will do so, by the help of the Lord.”

“Will you reverently obey your Ordinary, and other Chief Ministers unto whom is committed the charge and government over you, following with a glad heart all their godly admonitions, and submitting yourselves to their godly judgments?”

Answer: “I will do so, the Lord being my helper.”

Similar vows are required of Deacons.

Moreover, in the first year of Queen Elizabeth, an Act was passed for the Uniformity of Common Prayer and Service in the Church, and administration of the Sacraments, which Act is printed in the beginning of the Prayer Book, and is binding on the clergy just as much now, as it was at first.

A portion of the said Act is to the following effect:

“To the end that uniformity in the public worship of God (which is so much to be desired), may be effected, be it further enacted,

by the authority aforesaid, that every person who shall hereafter be presented, or collated, or put into any Ecclesiastical Benefice, or Promotion, within this Realm of England,—shall, in the church, or chapel, or place of worship, belonging to the said Benefice or Promotion, within two months next after he shall be in actual possession of the said Ecclesiastical Benefice or Promotion, upon some Lord's Day, openly, publicly, and solemnly, read the Morning and Evening Prayers, appointed to be read by, and according to, the said Book of Common Prayer, at the time thereby appointed; and, after such reading thereof, shall openly and publicly, before the congregation then assembled, declare his unfeigned assent and consent *to the use* of all things therein contained and prescribed, according to the form before appointed." [Which form may be seen by any one looking at the preface to the Book of Common Prayer].

A similar declaration is made previously to any one being licenced to a cure of souls. The 6th, 14th, and 28th Canons relate to the same subject; and the latter enacts, that, "If any Minister shall omit to use the form of prayer, or *any* of the orders or ceremonies pre-

scribed in the Communion Book, let him be suspended ; and if, after a month, he do not reform and submit himself, let him be excommunicated ; and then, if he shall not submit within the space of another month, let him be deposed from the ministry. And in order to appease any diversity (if any arise), and for the resolution of all doubts concerning the manner how to understand, do, and execute the things contained in this Book [of Common Prayer], the parties that so doubt, or diversely take any thing, shall resort to the Bishop of the Diocese, who, by his direction, shall take order for the quieting and appeasing of the same, *so that the same order be not contrary to any thing contained in this book ;* and if the Bishop of the Diocese be in doubt, then he may send for the resolution thereof to the Archbishop."

Now, here we have, in theory at least, ample provision for the maintenance of discipline and order in the public worship. Yet it is notorious that many of the Clergy do what seemeth good in their own eyes. You shall scarcely enter two churches where the mode of administration of the service is the same. In some churches most

important portions of the service are omitted, in some, various novelties are introduced.

The extreme inconvenience and impropriety of this arbitrary variation in public worship, has forcibly struck many of the Clergy, and they have spontaneously returned to the written orders of the Prayer Book, not only as being the rule according to which, by their own solemn declaration, they are bound to act, but as being the only possible means of establishing uniformity. Moreover, some of the Bishops have publicly recommended a return to the neglected portion of the Church Service. What is the result of their recommendation? In some places, their "godly admonitions" have been complied with, even by those who do not discern their necessity. They told their congregations that the Bishop had recommended certain restorations of the written instructions of the Church, and, therefore, they were to be restored; and so the matter ended, without the slightest difficulty or confusion. And so it might have been in every diocese in England, but for the opposition which has arisen in quarters where it could not have been expected.

In some places, the Clergy, who, before God,

vowed that they would reverently obey their Ordinary, and other chief Ministers, unto whom is committed the charge and government over them, have refused obedience ; others have silently neglected to follow the recommendations of their Bishop ; others have stirred up their congregations to resistance ; and yet these men are suffered still to officiate in the Anglican Church ! The conduct of some congregations, though not so flagrantly improper, inasmuch, as it is not in the teeth of vows solemnly and deliberately taken, is, nevertheless, most disorderly and schismatical. I will not record the name of the parish which has been most prominent in resisting the orders of their Diocesan. Suffice it to say, that they have informed the Bishop that the recommendations which he has made, and which, in this case, have been dutifully followed by the incumbent, are, though in exact accordance with the regulations of the Church, utterly inconsistent with their views and feelings ; nay, more, are so utterly repugnant to them, that they are firmly convinced that, if persisted in, it will ultimately very materially injure the true interests of the Church. “ We do not think it necessary,” they

say, "to particularise the alterations alluded to, because we think your Lordship must be well acquainted with them; it is sufficient to say that we disapprove of them altogether. We are quite aware of the directions which are contained in the Canons and Rubricks of the Church. . . . We are quite certain that any attempt now to enforce a rigid acquiescence in them, can only be accomplished at the expense of so large a secession from the Church, as to endanger its whole constitution."

The Bishop's answer to this address is voted to be "unsatisfactory and disrespectful!" and the memorialists state that they were "surprised,—extremely surprised and pained," at the language used by the Bishop to them, and they proceed to inform his Lordship that they were highly respectable persons, and actually had paid £5000 Church Rates in the last ten years! Really, the whole affair is so irresistibly ludicrous, that one's indignation is smothered in an uncontrollable fit of laughter. The language of these gentlemen amounts to just this,—“We beg to inform your Lordship, that our Vicar has lately made certain changes in the Service. We are quite aware that they were adopted at your

Lordship's recommendation, and also that they are according to the order of the Church ; but we desire you to take notice that we utterly disapprove of them, and we respectfully request your Lordship to understand, that we are not people by any means to be trifled with. We are not poor people, who sit in the free seats and side aisles, and with regard to whom it is not of much importance whether they go to church, or let it alone, We are rich people, who pay the rates, and consequently are the main pillars of the Church. Your Lordship will see how necessary it is to take care you don't offend us. To be sure it would be rather improper for such respectable persons to be seen going to a dissenting meeting-house ; but we have almost made up our minds to do so, if we cannot have our own way, in spite of Bishops, Parsons, and Rubricks. We remain, with the most profound respect, your Lordship's obedient, humble servants."

This correspondence is referred to, in order to illustrate the utter want of discipline into which our Church is fallen ; for though these people are distinguished by the ultra-schismatical tone which they have taken, they are, I fear, but representatives of a wide-spread feeling

amongst the members of the Establishment—*of the Church*, one can hardly call them ; for feelings and views more utterly inconsistent with every thing belonging to a true Churchman it is impossible to conceive.

The truth is, that our Church is eaten up with Puritanism, and that in its worst form—self-willed, irreverent, rebellious Puritanism ; the same spirit which pulled down Church and King two centuries ago, and will again work fearful mischief, if it be not kept under control.

Distressing as this want of discipline is, still it must not be supposed peculiar to the Anglican Church. If the insubordination and irregularity, which we deplore, is flung in our teeth by the Romanist, he ought to be aware that similar inconsistencies abound in his own Church, even more than here. Indeed, one cause of the Reformation of our Prayer Book, in the Sixteenth century, was the great diversity which previously existed in the different churches of England : — “ Some following Salisbury use, some Hereford use, and some the use of Bangor, some of York, some of Lincoln.”¹ But to come

¹ See the Preface to the Prayer Book.

down to more recent times, the Tablet, a Romanist publication, complains that, in France, at the time of the Jansenistical heresies, "the old and venerable Liturgies of the ages of faith were reformed and emasculated. Every strong expression of love and confidence in our blessed Lady, and of respectful homage for the Holy See, were hacked and mangled by their profane hands. The Lessons of the Saints were changed the Feasts of St. Peter were shorn of their splendour ; and the whole office clipped and shortened, till it became a mere skeleton of what it had been. The old, sacred style, once trodden under foot—the accursed spirit of accommodation to heretical fancies, once sanctioned and confirmed, there was no longer any restraint in the way of sham amendments, and no longer a hope of preserving anything like unity in the French Liturgy. Thus, down almost to our times, each diocese in France has had a rule of its own, and has its Breviaries and Missals cut up, according to the passing fancies of each succeeding Bishop. 'With one code,' says a writer already quoted, 'one might travel over France, because everywhere there is the

same law [in civil matters]; but *with our ecclesiastical formularies one can scarcely travel twenty leagues.*' In this emergency, the Archbishop of Rheims has applied to the Holy See for advice as to the proper course to be adopted in the unsettled state of the Liturgy of France. The following is the answer of his Holiness, dated August 6, 1842:—

‘To our Venerable Brother, Thomas Gousset, Archbishop of Rheims,—

‘Gregory XVI., Pope :

‘Venerable Brother, health and Apostolic benediction.

‘We clearly recognize the zeal becoming a pious and prudent Prelate in your two letters to ourselves, wherein you lament the diversity of Liturgies which have been introduced in many of the Churches of France, and which diversity has been still further increased of late, and especially by the novel circumscription of the dioceses, not without offence to the faithful. Grieving with you, venerable brother, on this account, we can perceive nothing more desirable than the universal observance of the constitutions of the holy Pius Vth, our predecessor of immortal memory, who caused both the Breviary and the Missal to

be set forth for the use of all Churches of the Roman rite, with a more accurate regard to the meaning of the Council of Trent, and would except from the obligation of receiving them those only who had been accustomed for two hundred years, at the least, to the use of some Breviary or Missal differing from them ; in such a manner, that is to say, that it should not be for them to change or alter books of this kind, now and again, at their pleasure, but that they might, if they desired it, retain those which they had been accustomed to use. Such, also, venerable brother, is our desire ; but you rightly understand how difficult and arduous a work it would be to uproot this custom in thy country, where it has flourished through so long a time : and therefore, dreading as we do the grave dissensions that might thence arise, it appears to us that we should abstain for the present, not only from more fully urging the matter, but also from dictating detailed answers to the questions which you have proposed to us. Recently, however, when a certain venerable brother of thy nation, availing himself in the most prudent manner of a fit occasion, succeeded in suppressing the divers Liturgies which

had crept into his Diocese, and recalled his entire clergy to the unaltered institutions of the Roman Church, we rewarded him with the praise of great deserving, and very readily conceded at his desire, the indult of a votive office for many days in the year, by which means his clergy, and others labouring in the cure of souls, might find themselves less frequently bound down to the performance of the longer offices of certain Ferias in the Roman Breviary. We trust, indeed, that, with the blessing of God, all the Bishops of France will, in their turn, follow the example of that Prelate, with a view to check this most perilous facility of changing and altering of Liturgies. In the meanwhile, again and again commending your zeal in this matter, we seek God with our prayers that he may enrich you daily with the most precious gifts of His grace, and multiply the fruits of His justice in that part of His vineyard which is watered by your labours. Finally, as an augury of that help from on high, and as a pledge of our peculiar good-will towards you, venerable brother, we most affectionately grant to you, and to all the faithful of

your Church, Priests and Laymen, the Apostolic benediction.

‘Given at Rome, at St. Mary the greater, on the 6th day of August, in the year one thousand eight hundred and forty-two, in the 12th year of our pontificate.’”

This letter, with slight changes, might have been written by our own Archbishop; and if it were a consolation to see that our neighbours are no better off than ourselves, or, in fact, a good deal worse, certainly this document would afford us the satisfaction. It exhibits, at any rate, a striking instance that discipline and uniformity of service are not maintained by the Popedom any more than by the Episcopacy. Of the two, however, I apprehend that *want of discipline* is the greater fault than *want of uniformity*. Some persons dwell much on the great inconvenience of having the service “at one side of London Bridge different from that at the other side.” Inconvenient, no doubt, and scandalous it would be: but during the course of transition, from irregularity to regularity, such variation seems unavoidable. It is better, surely, that one diocese should obey the rule of

the Church, even though it may vary from a neighbouring diocese, than that both dioceses should agree in disobedience. A Bishop, who conscientiously believed himself formed to promote conformity to the rule of the Church, surely need not wait till his neighbour, in the next diocese, came round to the same opinion. However we are trenching on matters beyond our province.

The want of discipline in the Anglican Church is strikingly shown, not only by the variations of form in public worship, but by the statements which are continually put forth by different Clergy, who are still suffered to officiate and occupy preferments. I have before me a document in the shape of a handbill, to which is affixed the name of a well-known clergyman, containing the following passage: "Sentiments have been maintained and preached which plainly lay the foundation for any Popish superstition that men can wish to establish; *Baptismal regeneration is one.*" Now any one reading the Baptismal Service will see that this is directly contrary to the doctrine contained in it.

I have also before me a pamphlet, by another beneficed member of the Anglican Church, called "Observations on the School returns for the Diocese of Bath and Wells," in which he says, at page 5, "I object to the observance of fasts and festivals as in itself superstitious and mischievous." Again, at page 7, he writes, "After the exposure of the consequences arising from a general use of the Church Catechism, made some time ago by the Bishop of Norwich, and of the thousands of falsehoods which children have been taught to utter, I had indulged a hope that the Church of England would either introduce a more rational and Scriptural formulary of instruction for children, or leave it to those whose proper business it is." At page 10, again, "I do not pretend to know what may have been the effect of Confirmation in former times, but I have witnessed enough in our day to make me wish to see it *abolished*." At page 12, he says, "In this parish the word schism, or dissent, is seldom used or thought of. The only place of worship, besides the parish church, is the chapel of the Wesleyan Methodists, and as my services are in the morning and afternoon, and their's in an evening—they never clash; but the meet-

ing-house is, as it were, a Chapel of Ease to the parish church. I am not aware that there is any feeling of hostility, or any idea of rivalry or competition ; but both places are devoted to the instruction of those who are willing to go. As a proof of the unity of spirit which exists, I need only mention that our Parish Clerk, who is a worthy and intelligent man, and a sincere Christian, is also the steward and class leader of the Wesleyan chapel, and the master of our daily and Sunday school ; and, I am told, that some of the church singers sing also at the chapel, and that some of those who attend the church during the day, are at the chapel in the evening, in addition to some who cannot set out during the day. Neither shall I do anything to prevent it."

Certainly, it must be admitted that, in no Church, save the Anglican, would the writer of these passages be suffered to continue an authorized teacher.

CHAPTER XI.

PRACTICAL DEFECTS OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH.—THE WANT OF DISCIPLINE FOR PENITENTS.

BESIDES the general neglect of discipline, there is also a particular sort of discipline, the disuse of which is yearly deplored by the Church.

“In the Primitive Church, (we read in the Communion Service), there was a godly discipline, that, at the beginning of Lent, such persons as stood convicted of notorious sin, were put to open penance, and punished in this world, that their souls might be saved in the day of the Lord; and that others, admonished by their example, might be more afraid to offend. Instead whereof (until the said discipline may be restored again, *which is much to be wished*), it is thought good that, at this time (in

the presence of you all), should be read the general sentences of God's cursing against impenitent sinners."

Thus our Church formally recognises the want of the *godly discipline of penance*, and looks forward to its restoration ; and every Clergyman is bound to use this service, and so express his concurrence in its statement.

But now as to the mode of performing penance. "The manner," says Wheatly, "in which the discipline was inflicted. is thus recorded by Gratian: 'On the first day of Lent, the penitents were to present themselves before the Bishop, clothed in sackcloth, with naked feet, and eyes turned towards the ground; and this was to be done in the presence of the principal Clergy of the Diocese, who were to judge of the sincerity of their repentance. These introduced them into the church, where the Bishop, all in tears, and the rest of the Clergy, repeated the Seven Penitential Psalms. Then rising from prayers, they threw ashes upon them, and covered their heads with sackcloth. and, then, with mournful sighs, declared to them that, as Adam was cast out of Paradise, so they must be cast out of the Church. Then the

Bishop commanded the officers to turn them out of the church doors, and all the clergy followed after them, repeating that curse upon Adam, 'In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread.' The like penance was inflicted upon them the next time the Sacrament was administered, which was the Sunday following.' And all this was done to the end that the penitents, observing how great a disorder the Church was in, by reason of their crimes, should not lightly esteem of penance."

Now, methinks I hear some modern Puritan exclaim, "Here is precious mummary! so we are to walk barefoot, and be turned out of church! This is your 'godly discipline' of penance!" To such objections, I answer, that it is the rule of our Church (see the 34th Article), that "it is not necessary that traditions and ceremonies be in all places one and utterly alike; for at all times they have been divers, and may be changed according to the diversities of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word." Therefore, if the much-to-be-desired event of the revival of this godly discipline were to take place, it would be for the Bishops of the Church

to take heed that nothing should be unnecessarily introduced, which might appear offensive or ludicrous to modern notions, but simply that such discipline should be appointed for penitent offenders, that, as the Church expresses it, "being punished in this world, their souls might be saved in the day of the Lord."

Connected with this subject, is another very important practical branch of the ordinances of the English Church, which has fallen into great disuse. Each Priest, at his ordination, promises that he "will be ready with all faithful diligence—to use both public and private monitions and exhortations, as well to the sick *as to the whole*, within his cure, as need shall require, and occasion shall be given." Afterwards, it is ordered, that "the Bishop, with the Priests present, shall lay their hands severally upon the head of every one that receiveth the order of Priesthood, the receivers humbly kneeling, and the Bishop saying, 'Receive the Holy Ghost, for the office and work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands ; whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven, and whose sins thou dost

retain they are retained.'” In the first exhortation, in the Communion Service, any person, whose conscience is disquieted, is, by the Priest, expressly invited, in these words, “ Let him come to me, or some other discreet and learned Minister of God’s Word, and open his grief, that, by the Ministry of God’s Holy Word, he may receive absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice.” And, in the Visitation for the Sick, it is ordered, “ that the sick person be moved to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which confession the Priest shall absolve him (if he humbly and heartily desire it) after this sort.—‘Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power in His Church to absolve *all* sinners, who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences, and by His authority, committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’”

Now, in the parochial system of the Church of England, there is, I believe, a very general attention to the Visitation of the Sick, but scarcely any confidential communication on reli-

gious matters with the "whole;" there is very little "opening of griefs," or administering of "ghostly counsel or advice," little confession of sins, and, I apprehend, absolution is very seldom administered in sickness, and never in health. This part of the priestly office has fallen into desuetude.

The absence of confidential religious communication between the priest and the people, when in strength and health, is one of the greatest drawbacks in the Anglican Church. I do not mean that such communication is unknown, but still it is far from general; the majority of Clergy would be much surprised if their parishioners began to come to them with cases of conscience, and "open their griefs" to them by special confession, and desire their ghostly counsel and instruction how to act in particular cases. Some Clergymen would doubt whether any such authority were given them; many would feel it difficult how to act; not so much from the absence of Christian sympathy, as from want of practice. And from not meeting with timely counsel and encouragement, I apprehend that many a stricken soul, which might have been plucked from the burning, relapses into indifference, and

some are driven into other communions, where they hope to find more sympathy.

Again, in consequence of the popular mode of preaching, and the neglect of penance, or of any substitute for it, by personal communication with the Priest, many, I fear, are fatally deceived by the supposed facility of repentance. They fall into sin and worldliness, and receive some startling warning—are struck by some sermon, or some portion of Scripture—some lively representation of the sinfulness and danger of sin, and of Christ's mercy to those who will believe in Him. Their mind assents, and they believe. This is a good beginning. They should go on to repent, to amend their lives, to "do works meet for repentance," to make amends for injuries done, give earnest of better things to come, accustom themselves to new ideas, inure themselves to a life of godliness, of love, and of faith. In all this, the ancient Church greatly aided her penitents. The Romish Church retained somewhat of the ancient method, but grievously corrupted it with superstition and impostures, making shameful gain of the penitential efforts of her

children, or reducing them to formal and perfunctory observances.

The Reformers of the Anglican Church swept away the abuses which had been suffered to intrude; but their successors have gone further than they, and have suffered the remains of ancient discipline, retained by the Reformers, to lapse into disuse, to the very great practical injury of true religion.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PRACTICAL DEFECTS OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH. THE
SCHISMS WHICH ABOUND IN THE NATION. HOW FAR, AS
A CHURCH, WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE ERRORS.

ANOTHER most grievous drawback to religion in this country is the disgraceful state of schism which exists among us.

At the same time it is not very easy to discern what right the Romanists have to boast over us, as they are accustomed to do, on this score. We have no more to do with the sects which abound in England than they have. The sects are no more parts of the Anglican Church than of the Romish. If the Romish Church declares that the sects in England are off-shoots from the English Church, we may, with equal truth, declare that all the Protestant denomina-

tions are emanations from the Romish Church. Neither Church, I conceive, has much cause to boast over the other. ♦

Still we must admit with sorrow that it is a grievous and shameful thing to see the English people, instead of being knit into one Church, divided into a multitude of sects and denominations. The bold front which schism has assumed is most iniquitous. We have arrived at that pass that it really requires some knowledge of history—some power of comprehensive view—to contemplate the true position of the Anglican Church, to trace her from the beginning, and consider her as one great body advancing ever onwards. Her stream has been so broken into currents, that many can scarcely discern the true channel, and those who only see what is before their face, and know nothing of history and principles, are led to view the present state of affairs as the natural order of things. Hence has arisen that monstrous caricature of Christianity above alluded to, under the name of the *various-denomination-system*, based on the notion that all persons are privileged to believe, and do, as they please in religious matters, and form themselves together into independent bodies,

unconnected with each other, and that, nevertheless, all shall be joined by some holy invisible bond, which shall unite them in sacred fellowship. Any thing more contrary to the whole tenor of the system developed in the New Testament it is difficult to imagine.

To what more obvious cause can we attribute the unholiness of the present day, and the small progress made by the Church among the heathen, than the lamentable divisions which have grown up amongst us in the last centuries. Until this sad state of things has been removed, as we may humbly believe it may be ere long, when its unscriptural character is more fully understood, we can have little hope that the scandal will cease to exist, or that the heathen world will receive from *us*, at least, the message of salvation.

The question for our present consideration is, how far the Church herself is implicated in these errors. No doubt they partially arose from the necessary proceedings of the Reformation, though as it may, I think, be shewn not with the fault of the Church of England. Sectarians argue that if the English Church might rightly separate themselves from that of Rome, other

sects may rightly separate from us. But this is fallacious. For first the English Church did not separate from Rome, but Rome from us. We reformed our own abuses, and Rome excommunicated us. Secondly, had we separated as dissenters suppose, it is a very different thing for one Church to separate itself from another Church on account of its corruption, and for members of a sound Church to leave her Communion, and set up altar against altar. The cases are in no way parallel. The example, therefore, of the English Church at the Reformation, though, no doubt, affording a *prima facie* excuse to dissenters, is no real precedent whatever. And the English Church must stand excused from a sinful encouragement of schism on that score at least. The right of private judgment is no principle of the English Reformation. There was marvellously little private judgment allowed on either side in the time of Henry VIII, or his immediate successors. The principle of the Reformation was a return to Scriptural and primitive practice.

But Secondly, it may be asked, does the English Church encourage schism by the laxity of her rules respecting it? On the contrary,

her language on this head is most stringent, as may be seen from the following Canons.

Canon III. "Whosoever shall hereafter affirm, that the Church of England by law established, under the King's Majesty, is not a true and Apostolical Church, teaching and maintaining the doctrine of the Apostles, let him be excommunicated *ipso facto*, and not restored, but only by the Archbishop, after his repentance and public revocation of this his wicked error."

Canon VI. "Whosoever shall hereafter affirm, that the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England, by law established, are wicked, anti-Christian, or superstitious, or such as, being commanded by lawful authority, men, who are zealously and godly affected, may not with any good conscience approve them, let him be excommunicated *ipso facto*, and so continue until he repent, and publicly revoke, such his wicked error."

Canon VII. "Whosoever shall hereafter affirm, that the government of the Church of England, under his Majesty, by Archbishops, Bishops, Deans, Archdeacons, and the rest that bear office in the same, is anti-Christian, or repugnant to the Word of God, let him be ex-

communicated *ipso facto*, and so continue until he repent, and publicly revoke, such his wicked errors."

Canon IX. "Whosoever shall hereafter separate themselves from the Communion of Saints, as it is approved by the Apostles' rules, in the Church of England, and combine themselves together in a new brotherhood, accounting the Christians who are conformable to the doctrine, government, rites and ceremonies of the Church of England to be profane and unmeet for them to join with in Christian profession, let them be excommunicated *ipso facto*, and not restored, but by the Archbishop, after their repentance, and public revocation of such their wicked errors."

Canon XI. "Whosoever shall hereafter affirm, or maintain, that there are within this realm other meetings, assemblies, or convocation of the King's subjects than such as, by the law of the land, are held and allowed, which may rightly challenge to themselves the name of true and lawful Churches, let him be excommunicated *ipso facto*, and not restored, but by the Archbishop, after his repentance and public revocation of such his wicked errors."

Canon XII. "Whosoever shall hereafter affirm, that it is lawful for any sort of Minister and lay-person, or either of them, to join together and make rules, orders, or constitutions in causes ecclesiastical, without the King's authority, and shall submit themselves to be ruled and governed by them, let them be excommunicated *ipso facto*, and not restored until they repent and publicly revoke those their wicked and Anabaptistical errors."

Whatever we may think of the grounds on which these Canons are founded, or of some of the statements contained in them, it cannot be argued that, after recording her opinions in such language as this, the Church does, in theory at least, give any countenance to the latitudinarian errors which are now prevalent, or the unscriptural figment of the various-denomination-system.

Still, in practice, it must be confessed that the English Church gives too much encouragement to schism; first, by suffering its own laws to fall into abeyance; and, still more, by the acts of her individual Ministers. A great body of our Clergy are accustomed to hold such language with regard to Dissenters, as to give them

great countenance, and to perplex the minds of Churchmen with regard to the real sinfulness of schism. What can be more perplexing to a plain Churchman, than to read the foregoing Canons of his Church, and then to see his own parochial pastor, it may be, publicly associating, for religious purposes, with men whom his Church declares *ipso facto* excommunicated. The too frequent result has been to generate a feeling that Dissent is of no importance whatever, and that each man is perfectly at liberty to attend the schismatical meeting-house without blame or danger.

Another way in which the Church, as a body—laity as well as clergy—has given encouragement to schism, is, by the sinful neglect to provide places of worship, and ministers of religion, for the fast-increasing population. The present generation is doing much to repair the injuries which the Church has received in these respects. She is everywhere building churches, and she is beginning to preach a sounder doctrine. Nevertheless, it must be expected that great drawbacks will continue; Dissenters having been accustomed to regard their separation as a right rather than as a sin, feel aggrieved by our at-

tempts to win them back, instead of answering our advances to reconciliation. Much of this might be expected; the schisms of the English nation will not be healed in a day; no, nor in a generation. Let it be our business to use such means as shall be most likely to restore a right feeling amongst them. In changing the tone with which we have been accustomed to speak to Dissenters, as beloved brethren and fellow-workmen, and using such language as shall give them to know that they are in great danger, and in a state of schism, we must speak gently, as to men who have erred in ignorance; we must take much blame to our own Church for its former negligence; and, as there can be no doubt that there are many honest and conscientious men amongst them, we may hope gradually to win them back to fellowship and intercommunion with the Church of their Fathers, from which, it may be, without wilful fault of their own, though to their great disadvantage, they are now estranged.

CHAPTER XIII.

PRACTICAL DEFECTS OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH. INTERNAL SCHISMS.

BESIDES the state of schism in which the whole nation is plunged, another great practical defect arises from the serious divisions, amounting almost to separation, within the Church itself. The differences amongst its professing members are as great as can possibly exist between persons subscribing the same formularies. They are, indeed, strictly speaking, greater ; for some have not scrupled to set aside the formularies, and yet continue to officiate in the Church. If the differences amongst Churchmen were unimportant, or quiescent, it might be our duty to pass them over, for fear of raising discussions

which would be unprofitable. But involving, as they do, almost contradictory principles, as well as most divergent practices, it is more consistent with Christian duty to discuss them fairly, provided it be with becoming candour and moderation. Many excellent men have, it is believed, been led into a false system, by the faulty traditions in which they have been educated, and by the example of good men, whom they cannot suspect to have been even in partial error. The disciples of such men as Cecil and Wilberforce cannot bring themselves to believe that there is any essential defect in their system. To them, especially, it seems the most faithful and Christian course, calmly and dispassionately to submit the great discrepancies of their principles, as well as practice, from those of the Church, of which they falsely believe themselves to be consistent members; and, at the same time, to suggest that those good and excellent men, whose names they venerate, might have been themselves among the first to follow the tide of advancing truth, and join in that restoration of their Church, to which their own pious labours may, in no slight degree, have contributed. Unfortunately, the spirit of party

has sprung up amongst us, and is fostered by agitation and recrimination. The only hope of peace and reconciliation (since our differences are far too great to be concealed or silenced) seems to consist in calm, sober, and straightforward discussion ; each party using plainness of speech ; yet without acrimony, and submitting to be judged by that Church, of which both conceive themselves to be faithful members. The question is, "Which are the true members of the Church of England?" This can only be decided by the Church itself.

Now, that we may see our way amidst the conflicting opinions of the present day, let us ask the question, What is, practically speaking, the religious system of the English Church ? *What is Anglo-Catholicism in practice ?*

In order to answer this question, I suppose we cannot be wrong in beginning with that summary which the English Church herself places in the hands of all her children ; I mean the Church Catechism. This, we may take for granted, is the foundation, at least, of the practical system which our Church teaches as the religion of the Bible, the Gospel of Salvation.

The first doctrine which we find in the

Church Catechism taught or assumed, is *the doctrine of original sin*. The child is told that, "being by nature born in sin, a child of wrath," he was, by baptism, made a child of grace. He is instructed in his own natural sinfulness, and the free and unmerited mercy which he has received for the sake of Christ, his Redeemer, in that while he was yet an infant, and subject to God's wrath, by reason of his sinful nature, he was made, by God's grace in baptism, "a Member of Christ, a Child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven." Without any merit or deserving of his own, he was adopted into God's Family, made a member of that body of which Christ is the head, and a sure title was given him to a heavenly inheritance. These are the first great truths which he is taught. Next follow the conditions on which these high privileges will be continued to him, namely, that he shall renounce sin, believe the Articles of the Christian Faith, and keep God's holy will and Commandments. The Articles of the Christian Faith which he is bound to believe, and the Commandments which he is bound to obey, are then declared to him; and seeing that he is not able of himself to do

the things which have been promised for him, he is taught to seek for special grace by prayer; and also, when the fitting time arrives, to secure continual strengthening and refreshment, by a faithful participation in the body and blood of Christ. Besides which, a solemn service is provided, according to which he is continually to render worship to God, and so obtain His grace and heavenly benediction, and increase in faith and holiness, as he advances onward in his Christian course.

This is the system which the Church delivers to her children as the Gospel scheme of salvation.

It is notorious, however, that there are many, even amongst Churchmen, who make little account of this scheme of salvation. They contend that, whatever may have been the advantage of baptism, in point of fact no persons keep their baptismal promises, and therefore none maintain their baptismal privileges. All fall more or less into sin, and, therefore, they contend, all need *conversion* in after life, if they are to obtain God's mercy. Upon this notion a large body in our Church, in common with dissenting bodies, either altogether deny the doc-

trine of Baptismal Regeneration, as taught in our formularies, or, in practice, set it aside, and address those who have received baptism, just as St. Paul addressed the heathen.¹ But surely this cannot be right. It is unreasonable to suppose, that a scheme so deliberately set forth by the Church—so carefully insisted on in her formularies, and ordered to be taught to all whom she has admitted to Christian Baptism—is a system of religion *for children only*,

¹ Everything which is written by the Bishop of Sodor and Man must be received with the respect due both to his office, and his single-hearted sincerity of purpose, even by those who do not agree with his statements. In his recent publication, called "What is Christianity?" while, with his usual candour, he unequivocally admits the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, yet he entirely excludes it from his scheme, and considers only the case of persons who have to begin their course entirely *de novo*. "If it be asked," he says, "why nothing is here said of baptism, it may be observed that the persons to whom these pages are addressed, are such as have been already admitted into the Church by that sacrament, but who, through sin, or the neglect of those who have been their guides, have fallen from the state of grace into which they were then admitted, into one of greater or less spiritual darkness." Surely the book should be called, "What is Christianity for Lapsed Christians?" or "What is Repentance?" not "What is Christianity?" That which our Church makes the foundation of a Christian life is designedly omitted.

and one which has no applicability to grown-up persons. It is not to be believed that this early and solemn admission into the Christian Covenant must all go for nothing; that the privileges which they have received are valueless, and the conditions to which they are so solemnly pledged, sure to be broken. The truth is, that the Church not only *begins* her scheme with Baptismal Regeneration, but *continues in the same system throughout*. She does not consider her Catechism as a mere religion for the young, but as containing the fundamental truths on which their Christian life should be built. The congregation present at the Baptism of Infants, are emphatically called on, "with one accord, to make their prayers that the child may *lead the rest of his life according to this beginning*"¹ We are taught to pray that, "being regenerate, and made God's children by adoption and grace, *we may daily be renewed by the Holy Spirit;*"² that God will *strengthen us* by the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, and *daily increase* in us His mani-

¹ See Baptismal Service.

² See the Collect for Christmas Day.

fold gifts of grace, *until we come to His everlasting kingdom.*"¹

It is, indeed, most true that none are perfectly pure from sin in the sight of God. Still we may trust that there are many who do not so sin—so wilfully, presumptuously, and habitually transgress God's law, as to forfeit the privileges of their baptismal covenant. Some there are, we would fain hope, who are nurtured by pious parents in the faith and fear of God, and like the young Samuel or Timothy, serve Him from their youth up. It may well be doubted whether the majority of those eventually saved, will not consist of those who have thus grown up in God's service, and never yielded themselves to the positive *dominion* of sin; and whether our best means of completing the number of God's elect, be not by endeavouring to add to the number of those who shall avail themselves of their baptismal privileges, by carefully training them, from their youth up, in godly ways.

Moreover, there may be many who, though not trained up as children of God from their infancy, yet would not rightly be said to have

¹ See the Confirmation Service.

forfeited their baptismal covenant. Many there are who have not had the blessing of pious parents to develop the seeds of grace within them, and, in consequence of early neglect, lack that godliness and spiritual mindedness, which is the mark of God's most favoured servants, and yet are not devoid of conscientiousness and right principle—who firmly believe in Christ, their Saviour, and desire to do His Will; their misfortune being, that they have not been rightly trained and instructed in what the law of God requires. These shall grow up too much in careless, worldly ways, and appear little influenced by religion; and yet when the promises and privileges of their baptism are presented to their minds, they shall acknowledge the obligation, and begin to serve God more faithfully. Such as these could not be said to have so fallen from their baptismal grace, as to need conversion. The seed was sown at their infancy, and did not at once take root; but, when quickened by Divine grace, it shot forth, and bore fruit more or less abundantly. Others there may be, in whom the toys and sports of infancy, or the innocent pleasures of youth, may have been suf-

ferred to occupy so much of their hearts, that their spiritual state could not be called satisfactory or safe. Yet when they are tempted to yield their members to Satan, the grace of God within them, first given them at their baptism, may have striven and gained the mastery, and saved them from destruction ; and so the very approach of danger may have proved the occasion of safety. Others, again, may have been overtaken by sin, and, in an evil hour, yielded to temptation ; and then their conscience, smitten and alarmed by the flagrant evidence of guilt, may at once have thrown them back on God's mercy ; so that they shall not be ranked amongst those who have presumptuously yielded themselves to the dominion of sin, or been guilty of the great offence of trampling under foot the grace of God. These cases are mentioned, not with the slightest intention of palliating sin, or denying the great danger of swerving, be it never so little, from the path of duty ; but to shew that it is a false assumption to say, that all have so sinned after baptism—that their Baptismal Regeneration goes for nothing, and that they need again to be converted. Even in the case of those multitudes,

who, though baptised in infancy, are brought up in vice and misery, and scarcely know the name of God, except to blaspheme it; yet their spiritual state may be very different from that of heathens; there may be that within them which will be ready to respond to the call of duty, when they are addressed as the adopted sons of God. As to the case of those—too many, alas! in number—who, having been brought up in the knowledge of the truth, wilfully and presumptuously sin against it, and knowingly reject the motions of God's grace, and, by a course of habitual crime, dishonour their high calling; these are not heathens, they are apostates. They are not to be addressed as men who have nothing to do but to believe and be justified. They have to repent, with many tears, undo the fabric of their evil deeds, root out the traces of former crimes, and change the whole current of their thoughts, words, and actions. By some the case of these has been thought so hopeless, that they have been disposed to deny the possibility of their salvation. But our Church takes not this gloomy view. It declares, in the 16th Article, that “not every deadly sin, willingly committed after baptism, is sin against the Holy

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Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after baptism. After we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin, and, by the grace of God, may rise again, and amend our lives; and, therefore, they are to be condemned which say they can no more sin as long as they live here, or deny the place of forgiveness to those who truly repent."

The Church's practical scheme, therefore, is this,—*Regeneration or new Birth at Baptism*, and a course of holy living in the faith and fear of God; and, to those who fall into sin, *the gift of repentance*. And, it should be observed, that repentance is a word of wide significancy; applying not less to those daily sins of omission, or commission, from which the holiest and most faithful men are not exempt, than to those presumptuous and headstrong crimes, or courses of crimes, which place the sinner for the time beyond the pale of the covenant. The whole tenor of the Church Service is adapted to the case of those who *have been* admitted into the Church of God, whether they have continued, in the main, to walk as becometh those who

have been redeemed of the Lord, or whether they have fallen from their privileges, and need repentance. None are addressed as heathen who need for the first time to be converted. The conversion of the heathen is a different affair altogether. The formularies prepared by our Church, for the use of her children, are all along intended for the use of those who *have been born again of water and the Spirit*.

On the other hand, the modern system of Dissenters, and that adopted by the (so called) Evangelical party in the Church, is based on quite a different theory, namely, that of *conversion*.

By persons of this school the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration is not unfrequently flatly denied or passed over; though, if there be one doctrine more plainly taught, or more prominently insisted on by the Church, it is that. They seem never to contemplate the possibility of children being trained up in the faith and fear of God; they take for granted that all have forfeited their privileges as God's children; they apply to baptised Christians all those passages of Holy Scripture which speak of unconverted

heathens ; and, instead of making it their great aim with the Church to lead up the young children in the way of God's Commandments ; they busy themselves almost exclusively in preaching conversion to adults, nay, to children also. Thus, the simple Gospel scheme, so beautifully embodied in the formularies of our Church, is thrown into inextricable confusion. Regeneration, Conversion, and Repentance, are all jumbled together. Baptised persons, penitents, and heathens, are all addressed in the same language. In short, another Gospel, of human device, is substituted for that which our Church teaches us, as that of Holy Scripture ; those formularies of our Church, the Baptismal Service, the Catechism, and Confirmation, which by the Dissenters are summarily rejected, are, by those Evangelical Churchmen who sympathise with the Dissenters, either tacitly passed over, or explained away in a manner, the extreme impropriety and inconsistency of which can scarcely be concealed, even from those who adopt this course.

As this question, which is of vital importance, turns principally on the fact whether Baptismal Regeneration is, or is not, the doctrine of the

Church of England, I would beg any person, who is doubtful on this subject, to take his Prayer Book, and read the Baptismal Service, the Church Catechism, and the Service for Confirmation. I will not use a single argument, or comment, but leave the decision to the plain sense of any honest man, whose mind is open to the truth. I conceive it utterly impossible for any candid person to read those services, without acknowledging that Baptismal Regeneration, or New Birth, is not only a doctrine of the Church, but the first, and, in a manner, the fundamental doctrine of her system.

It must not be supposed that this is a mere speculative difference about a doctrine. The difference of doctrine gives a distinct colour to the Church system, and that which is opposed to it.

The Church system, as represented in our Prayer Book, and generally in the liturgic forms of earlier Ages, adapts itself to the case of those who, having been received into the Church of Christ, are to be led on by a course of holy training through their life of trial, encouraged to continual advance, aided when their steps falter,

reclaimed when they have wandered. For this purpose a solemn ritual of service is provided, such as is suitable to pledged soldiers of the Cross. Each day a portion of the living oracles of God is set forth before them: their faith is quickened by the presentation to their minds of all the circumstances relating to their redemption, as well as the Person of their adored Redeemer, His Advent, Birth, Life, Death and Resurrection. The Gospel scheme is thus placed before them, each year, in a round of holy ordinances. Care is taken, also, so to arrange the service of the Sanctuary with alternate praise and supplication, that a most solemnizing effect shall be produced on the minds of those who faithfully join therein, and their minds preserved in an equable state of pious devotion; or, if they have fallen into sin, shall be touched with fear and shame, and quickened to a sense of their unworthiness and danger. Above all, the means of grace and strength, and comfort, are, from time to time, provided for them, in the Communion of their Saviour's body and blood. Proper times, also, are appointed for self-denial and humiliation, and God's ordained Ministers are directed, in their

capacity of teachers, to address their congregations on all fit occasions of their assembling together; and instruct them, both by preaching, and catechising, and visitation, in the doctrines and duties of religion—set before them Christ Crucified—explain to them their Christian privileges—encourage, exhort, admonish, reprove, in short, assist them continually in their progress to the inheritance which was sealed and delivered to them, when they were adopted into God's family, and made "members of Christ" at Baptism.

Such is the Church's ostensible and recognized practice. The Evangelical, or, more properly speaking, *the Conventicle system*, is quite dissimilar in theory and character. Its main object is the sermon. "We are justified by faith." "Faith cometh by hearing." "How shall they believe on Him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher?" The preaching here spoken of they consider as the same thing as the set sermons which gratify the ears of modern congregations. What St. Paul says, obviously with reference to the mode of conveying Gospel truth to the heathen nations, the Evangelicals assume as the system

applicable to the members of a Christian Church. That we are justified by faith, all of us receive as a most important Christian verity; but not to be thrust forward, to the exclusion of others no less unquestionably revealed. Preaching we all acknowledge to be a most effectual ordinance; but, surely, to those brought up in the bosom of a Christian Church, "faith cometh" in a variety of ways, and not solely, or even principally, by hearing sermons. Faith cometh by parental instruction, by catechizing, by reading the Word of God, or good books; by the example of holy men, by conversation with those who have already found Christ, by the mysterious influence of contact with what is good, by prayer, by self-denial, by the public worship of God, by sacraments. Preaching is but *one* ordinance or means whereby faith cometh to individuals in a Christian land.

The exaggerated view of preaching adopted by the Evangelicals, whether in the Church or out of it, pervades their whole system, and gives it its peculiar tone and character. It is a very remarkable fact, not perhaps sufficiently adverted to, that many bodies of Dissenters positively have no public worship, properly so called.

Hymns, indeed, they sing, but common or united prayers they have none; all pretence to prayer is the extemporaneous effusion of their minister, which they cannot join in, because they know not what he is going to say; they can only judge of it after he has said it. There never was such a thing heard of, since the beginning of Christianity, as a congregation of men professing the religion of Christ, and yet offering up no common prayer to their God and Saviour. Yet such is the condition of Dissenters; and many members of our own Church approach them in spirit much more nearly than they ought.

The Church is regarded by them not so much as a "house of prayer" as a place in which to hear the Word; all its arrangements are made with a view to accommodate people comfortably while they sit and hear, and little care taken that they may kneel and pray. The grand object of a religious assembly, according to this theory, is to listen to a preacher speaking eloquently and powerfully on the doctrine of the Cross. Then those who are ordained to salvation believe, and straightway they become good Christians, and all the rest is supposed to

follow; and so they go on Sunday after Sunday "ever hearing and never coming to the knowledge of the truth." An evangelical preacher returning after an absence from home, expresses his delight, not that he is again permitted to join his congregation in the worship of God, but that he has the opportunity again to deliver, and they to hear, the Gospel message. The obvious defect in the conventicle system, into which our whole Church has more or less fallen, is that the other requirements of religion are postponed to preaching. The part of the congregation in the worship of God is often left entirely to the clerk. Not a solitary "amen" shows that one of them joins even outwardly, much less in spirit. The Psalmody is performed by a few hired singers, or charity children, placed by themselves in an orchestra. There is a disposition to undervalue the Sacraments; the Service of Baptism has been ousted altogether; the Lord's Supper has been either much neglected, or held up as merely an impressive ceremony to aid our faith; daily service decried; Fasts and Festivals pronounced Popish; the ordinances of religion seldom spoken of, except to warn people against their abuse; the giving of alms, as a

religious act has been suffered to fall into disuse; worship in the Church, without the addition of a sermon, has sunk into contempt; every thing, in short, has been made to give way to the paramount object of preaching. It is not asserted that all Evangelical ministers have fallen into this system in an equal degree; nor is it denied that amongst those who, more or less, adopt this system, there have been, and still are, many excellent men. Many are diligent parochial pastors, zealous in their calling; and good men are sure to do good, in spite of their system, as well as harm *through* their system. The result, however, of the modern conventicle system has been a total failure; if it be any test of the value of a system, that it maintains the Church or the nation in a healthy state. Not only has the conventicle system failed to maintain the wholesome influence of religion; but, on the contrary, we believe that, by its omission of necessary doctrines, neglect of wholesome ordinances, and its departure from the spirit of sound Churchmanship, it has pandered, in no slight degree, to the self-willed, schismatical, and turbulent spirit of

the times, and reduced the Church almost to the level of a sect.

The two principal opponent parties in the Church consist of those who desire to uphold the present popular Evangelical or *Conventicle system*, and those who wish to act up to the *Church system*, as set forth in the formularies of the Church of England.

Speaking abstractedly, differences and controversies in a Church are much to be deplored. They cause great scandal, and give the enemy occasion to blaspheme. Still it may happen that discussion shall be necessary. The Reformers of the sixteenth century could never have removed the abuses then existing in the Church, without enduring much contention and controversy. No one who deems that Reformation to have been necessary, would say that peace ought to have been purchased at the expense of truth, or that men were bound to acquiesce in great abuses, for fear of disturbing the peace of the Church. What was true at the Reformation is also true at the present time. If the doctrine and formularies of the Church have been suffered to fall into neglect; and if, in consequence, great

ignorance, and great irregularity, and great ungodliness, has arisen—if true religion has fallen into much contempt, and immorality and irreverence have become almost overwhelming, then it is necessary for those who desire to restore the efficiency of the Church, to raise their voices aloud, and call for reformation of abuses. They must submit to be called disturbers of the peace, and innovators, even as the Reformers of the sixteenth century were called. But these accusations must not move them from a resolute perseverance in their most necessary work.

It may well be questioned whether the Church is not in greater danger from the conduct of the *neutrals*, who shut their eyes against her defects, and, hoping things may last their time, throw cold water on the attempts of others to restore the Church to purity and vigour. The neutrals constitute, probably, the largest body of the three. They consist of persons influenced by a vast variety of motives and feelings, but united by the common bond of objection to change and excitement. There are elderly clergymen, who do not like that younger men should dictate improvement. Things have gone on, as they suppose, well enough during

their time, and they do not see why they should not continue in the same course. There are dignified clergy, in high office, who do not like that those of inferior station should set themselves up as judges. Others who, though aware that improvement is needful, shrink from the labour and responsibility, and, perhaps, danger, which would fall on them, if they took, as they must, the lead in reformation. Others there are, men of the world, who judge of things by the opinion of the great and influential in society; men of refined habits, who do not like the notion of entering upon a course of greater self-denial than they have been accustomed to; indolent men, who grudge additional trouble; cautious men, who will not risk present peace for the chance of a greater good; timid men, who, though they admit the defects which have crept in, cannot muster courage to face them, and propose the necessary amendments. Some there are who believe, perhaps justly, that they have brought their own parishes to a tolerably fair state. and are quite unaware of the lamentable condition of other places. Then there are liberal men, who cannot bear anything which has the appearance of interference with the

right of private judgment; and Conservatives, who dislike anything in the shape of innovation. Some there are who have fallen into latitudinarian views, and have accommodated themselves to the circumstances of the age; and, instead of doing their best "to drive away erroneous and strange doctrines" from their parishes, have come to the conclusion, that schism is a sort of necessary evil, and that their best course is to be on civil terms with the dissenting minister, and let him take his way, while they take theirs. Then there are persons who stand aloof, under the notion that all systems have something good in them, as well as bad; which, perhaps, is correct; but then they forget that, when principles are in question, opposing systems cannot both be right; and that, while it is their duty to "prove all things," they must "hold fast that which is good." Add to these a vast body of parochial clergy, who have gone on in a regular way for many years, and have performed their duties creditably, and are respected by their parishioners; and in whose parishes the deterioration has been so gradual, that they have scarcely perceived it. Their congregations have remained much the same; the same pews have

been usually filled by the same families ; there has been about the same number of communicants. But they forget that a new dissenting chapel has sprung up since they were incumbents ; a new dissenting school has been opened ; a new hamlet has arisen, with hundreds of souls without the means of grace ; besides the gradual increase of beer-shops, and other provocations of immorality. They discern not the altered tone in the youth of the parish—the increasing recklessness and disregard of authority. All these things have risen up so gradually, that they vainly flatter themselves affairs are no worse than they were, and that they may as well go on as they have done. They have not mastered the important truth that the Church, to perform her functions, must not only be *conservative*, but *progressive*.

All these classes of persons, in many respects so different from each other, unite in aversion to active measures for the restoration of the Church—letting things take their course, and slumbering in security, until they are awakened from their lethargy by some symptoms which they cannot misunderstand ; a rebellious vestry, a general desertion of public worship, a refusal

to pay church rate, or some significant token, proving to them that they have failed to maintain the influence of the Church, and that, while they have slept, the enemy has sown his tares. These are but mutterings of the coming storm—slight indications of the fury of that tempest with which the Church must, ere long, expect to be assailed, if she avail not herself of the present calm to assume her true attitude, and regain the respect and confidence of her sons.

That there are, amongst this neutral party, a great many men, excellent both in ability and in intention, is not for a moment to be denied. But they seem generally to labour under a peculiar fallacy. Their conscientious desire is to act with Christian moderation; but they have not taken due care to ascertain *what Christian moderation really is*. On this subject, I beg to transcribe a portion of a sermon, formerly preached before the University of Oxford, and with great respect to submit it to the consideration of these who pride themselves on being moderate men:—

“It is the just boast of our own Church to have attained the *via media* between contrary extremes, and we shall best prove ourselves her

sons by aiming at a like moderation in all things. There is, however, a prevailing fallacy, which, though exceedingly obvious, does not appear to be generally considered. It may be illustrated in this way:—Suppose a scheme of charity, or religious usefulness, to be submitted to us, with a request that we should join in promoting it by our contributions. Those persons who approved the plan, and desired to contribute moderately and reasonably, would commonly inquire how much others had given, and then would adopt the mean or average rate of contribution. But if it so happen, as it generally does, that the whole list is shamefully low, and quite unworthy of the dignity and importance of the object in view, then it is manifest that, in aiming at moderation, we are incurring the blame of parsimony. Just so with reference to principles and opinions. If a whole age is lamentably low in point of moral feeling or principle, then he who thinks that he has attained moderation by steering midway between current opinion, adopts a rule which must needs mislead him. A sounder judgment, and more enlarged view, would induce him rather to take up principles, which would be termed by his contemporaries verging

on extreme. So utterly inadequate a test of moderation in opinion is the mere current estimation of the world. It is evident that true moderation does not consist in adopting the mean opinion of any particular age, but in attaining the true mean, which is irrespective of time and circumstances."¹ It does not consist in joining the mixed company of neutrals above described,—the timid, the cautious, the indolent, the worldly, the political; but in joining those who are earnestly contending for the truth; and with Christian zeal, tempered by prudence, aiding in the restoration of the Church's true doctrines and discipline. And if the Church of England occupies, as we believe, the *via media* between the extremes of Romanism and Dissent, and if our acknowledged formularies represent the Church's real theory, then *those who desire to bring the Church back to her just position, surely have the truest claim to the praise of being moderate men.*

¹ "Sermons on Zeal and Moderation," by the Rev. W. Gresley, page 114.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PRACTICAL DEFICIENCIES OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH. WANT OF REVERENCE.

ONE of the most pervading evils of the English people is *irreverence*. I say of the English people, and not of the English Church; because, in the ordinances of the Church, there is a chaste and decent solemnity, which, if rightly carried out, is amply sufficient to produce and sustain reverential feelings; but the behaviour of the people is so generally irreverent, that the blame seems almost to attach to the Church itself.

Now, irreverence is very nearly allied to irreligion. Reverence is the garb in which true religion appears. Certainly it may be simulated, so that the outward deportment shall be no certain index of pious feeling within. But there

can be no mistake as to irreverence. *That* is a sure proof of very serious deficiency, to say the least. A religious man is instinctively reverent in behaviour. All things pertaining to God and religion affect the pious heart with holy impressions, which effectually prevent irreverent acts. Therefore, speaking generally, if an individual, or an age, or a Church, is palpably irreverent, it proves, to a great extent, a want of religious feeling.

Those who blame the English Reformation are accustomed to maintain that irreverence is one of those evil dispositions, or tendencies, which have sprung from that event. It would be sinful to attempt to palliate, or excuse, our fault; still, it may be justly said, that our irreverence was, in a great degree, a reaction from the superstition of Rome. The struggle necessary for the overthrow of that long-established system of outward observances and excessive ceremonial—the process of evolving the great truth, that true religion consists in devotion of the heart, and not in bowings, genuflexions, and other mere external ceremonies,—naturally led a headstrong and wilful age into the contrary extreme. In tearing down idols from their

churches, the Reformers, at the same time, destroyed much that was beautiful and holy. In removing what they considered "mummery" from their service, they fell into a contempt even for decent and solemn ceremonial. Therefore, it is, in a great degree, to the superstition of Rome, that the subsequent irreverence may justly be ascribed.

Moreover, we cannot concede to the Romanist that all the reverence is on his side, and all the irreverence on ours. There are many prominent objects in Romish worship for which irreverence is even too mild a term. First, the frequent introduction into their churches of graphical representations of God the Father, in defiance of the continual warnings of Holy Scripture, that we presume not to make any representation of Him, of Whom human eye hath seen no similitude. Akin to this are the vulgar representations of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the shape of dolls, dressed up in gaudy garments, with tinsel beads, and other ornaments, before which the common people, in foreign churches, are wont to kneel in posture of devotion. With what indignation and pity must the Holy Mother of our Lord look down upon such desecration.

If her pure spirit is capable of grief, how deeply pained must she be, that she, the holiest of her sex, should be made the object of this irreverent profanation.

Another object, which appears highly irreverent to Anglo-Catholics, is the exhibition of the bones of martyred saints, which ought to be piously committed to the earth, there to wait in peace the day of Resurrection. The excessive presumptuousness of the Romish Church in mutilating the Holy Eucharist, and denying to the laity participation in their Saviour's blood, contrary to his own express words—this, also, is an instance of irreverence, if not of something worse, which is most shocking to all those who view the Romish Church from a distance, and not from within her own pale. In short, there are many, very many practices, in common use with the Romanists, which strike us with the same feeling of serious disapproval which *they* are wont to express for us.

Again, many of the evidences of devotion which may well be admired in the Romish Church, belong rather to the mediæval ages, than to present times. The beautiful architecture of our cathedrals and ancient churches—

the care taken that God's House should be worthy of His Name—the devotion of all their energies and tastes to the service of religion; these are rather traits of an earlier and more reverent state of society, than of a particular Church or system. Until the recent revival of architectural taste, a Roman Catholic chapel, in any country town in England, was scarcely to be distinguished, in point of beauty or superior structure, from the meeting-house of any other body of separatists. Nor have Romanists escaped, any more than their neighbours, from the adoption of those unworthy practices, and means of raising money, which are so justly reprobated in our own Church as irreverent and improper. Perhaps they may excuse such doings in this country, on the plea of the general evil example which prevails. But what shall we say to such a shocking fact as the following, which occurred at Madrid so recently as the month of October, 1843:—"The Queen and her sister were present at a bull fight, given for the object of procuring friends (*qu. funds?*) to build a church at Chamberi, near Madrid; the sport was magnificent; eight bulls were killed, and twelve horses remained on the ground,

gored and disembowelled. The performance lasted three hours, and produced upwards of £1,000.¹

Still, though it is necessary to shew in self-defence, that, when the Romish Church accuses us of irreverence, she is blind to her own very serious defects in the same way, it would be both unjust to deny, that in many points of conduct, she unquestionably surpasses us in the outward appearance of religion, and unwise to suffer prejudice to prevent us from correcting our own faults after her example.

Contrast only the mode of entering a church amongst the members of an English congrega-

¹ See the *Times*, Oct. 21, 1843. The Editor of the *Times*, has assured the writer that there is no doubt of the correctness of this account. Much has been said, in newspapers, and other publications, about the irreverent doings in some of our Cathedrals, especially St. Paul's, in London. If what is said be true, it ought surely to be corrected. But the worst accounts, describe a state of things far less disgraceful, than what we learn to have existed in the year 1385, when the Bishop of London, complained that in St. Paul's Cathedral, "men and women met in crowds for the purpose of disposing of their goods, and articles of traffic, not only at ordinary times, but especially on solemn days and festivals, and there on their stalls, they venture to spread out, and to sell their goods, and chattels, and merchandise, just as though they were in a market, or a fair," besides committing various other abominations.

tion, and of a Roman Catholic. The Romanist on entering God's House dips his finger in the consecrated water, and signs the sign of the Cross, on his breast, or forehead, in order to remind himself of that which is the great object of our faith ; then kneels, or humbly bows, to the high altar, and in taking his place, bends on his knees and prays silently for some while. The Protestant walks in with a careless *nonchalant* air, looks for a moment into his hat, flings himself carelessly into the corner of a pew, and not unfrequently begins smiling and bowing to his acquaintances.

Now without expressing approval of the particular doings of the Romanist on entering church, it is obvious to remark, that he has at least the appearance of greater devotion, than the other.¹ And it is the same generally, throughout the service; the one appears really to be in earnest in what he is doing, the other

¹ As an instance of contrast, a friend informs us that a Roman Catholic carpenter, employed to repair the rails of a chancel, (and this in a Protestant Church) carefully took off his shoes ; whilst in another church, a Protestant workman was seen to stand, with his shoes on, on the top of the Holy Table itself. Does any one sneer at the piety of the Romanist. and call it superstition ? I can only say, that I sincerely pity any such person.

seems to take little or no interest in the matter. His irreverent entrance is but a sample of his conduct throughout. Instead of kneeling to pray, a large portion of the congregation, in many churches, sit at their ease with the most perfect coolness. To say that these people are praying to God is absurd; their very countenances seem to show that they despise the whole affair. Even in the case of those who apparently desire to do what is right, or, at least, to set a good example, the ridiculous mistakes which they make, show that they have no knowledge of the proprieties, or even meaning, of the service. Some will sit when they ought to stand, or stand when they ought to sit; some will repeat the exhortation, or absolution after the Minister—thus exhorting and absolving *themselves*. Now, all this arises from the prevailing inattention, or want of interest, in the services of the Church; insomuch, that people will not even give themselves the trouble to ascertain how they ought to behave, or what they are really about. They are perfectly passive; they know generally that they are supposed to be engaged in prayer, or praise; but, of the relation of one to the other, and the particular

bearings of each portion of the service, they take little or no heed. They regard it merely as a sort of preparation for the sermon ; which feeling is, in a great measure, produced, or continued, by the disproportionate pains lavished on the sermon, in comparison with the prayers and psalmody.

But why should we allow our Church to remain under such grievous disadvantage ? Why should we thus render null the advantage which we possess in our pure and primitive Liturgy ? Why should we endure that discredit should be thrown on our holy services, by the irreverence with which they are treated. That which is in itself most hallowed, and beautiful, and impressive, is made to appear dull and tedious, mainly by the absence of sympathy in the worshippers ; and many, finding no delight or comfort in it, leave our communion, and go to other places, where their feelings may be touched, and their spirit excited.

I am persuaded that this irreverence in God's service, is one principal cause of the irreligion and ungodliness which abound amongst us. A parent brings up his children, it may be, in the knowledge of their relation to God, and

their religious duties ; and then he takes them with him to public worship, which is ordained as one of the principal means of communicating grace, and preserving the Christian life within us ; acting on our feelings by the constraining influence of association and example. But what must be the impression on the mind of a young person, when taken to public worship, in many an English church ? Instead of finding himself in an atmosphere of holiness, and being led on, by the associations around him, to pour out his soul in prayer and praise to God, he sees such irreverence, such want of attention, such self-seeking, such exclusiveness, and a host of evil qualities, which not even the sacredness of God's House can induce men to attempt to conceal,—that the religious impression of his childhood receives no food or nutriment, and he gradually sinks into the ungodliness of the rest.

It is to this sad irreverence in public worship that we may trace, in a very great degree, the failure of our attempts to educate the lower classes at our national schools. They shall be brought up in the knowledge of Holy Scripture,

and be able to answer the most difficult questions, and prove all the Thirty-nine Articles by appropriate texts; yet they shall have no reverence—their masters are not reverent—their parents are not reverent—they see no reverence when they go to church—the service is not reverent—there is no reality in it. It is, to appearance, a mere form; not an assembly of Christians, really worshipping their God and Saviour, in spirit and in truth.

The habits of children are formed far more by example than by precept. It is to no purpose that they are taught by their pastor and schoolmaster to repeat the responses in church, if they observe that their elders are taking no part with them. What they thus do by compulsion will not abide by them as a habit of devotion, unless they see, by the example of their superiors, that it is a thing in which they are interested. The mixed sound of a bellowing organ and squalling children, which one too often hears in parish churches, is a poor substitute for that service of the heart and understanding, which ought to proceed from a Christian congregation.

The grand defect of the English Church and

people is, that *we are not a worshipping people*. We have no taste or relish for the service of the Sanctuary. Hence the neglect into which it has fallen. We do not even attempt to do our best. Any appearance of unusual devotion would be thought either enthusiastic or hypocritical. We even appear more cold and indifferent than we are. We never suffer ourselves to be betrayed into the slightest look or gesture of emotion. The clasped hands, the upturned eye, or any sign of spontaneous feeling, is carefully suppressed. To smite the breast, and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner," would be looked on as the act of a Pharisee rather than a Publican. In our abhorrence of formality, we fall into the very error that we condemn. It is time that we endeavour to rid ourselves of this unnatural and constrained coldness, and venture to exhibit some sign that we really are worshippers of God, instead of mere passive listeners.

It may seem a hard thing to speak thus in disparagement of that Church of which we are members ; but it is in the earnest hope that a knowledge of her practical faults may lead her

sons to resort to her excellent theory, and to restore that healthy tone of piety and reverence which her services, rightly followed, are so well calculated to foster.

CHAPTER XV.

REMEDIES FOR THE EXISTING EVILS.

No one who seriously considers the present condition of the English nation, can do otherwise than acknowledge that it is in a very unsatisfactory state. The irreverence, and immorality which abound—the luxuriousness of the rich—the self-willed, rebellious spirit of the poor—the ignorance of what it most behoves all classes to know; all these evils taken together, are, perhaps, greater than they have ever been at any former period of our history.

Now, the Apostolic Church is, as we believe, God's instrument for leavening the world with good. It is "the salt of the earth; but if the

salt hath lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?" The lamentable state of the people proves that the Church has been, in some way, thwarted or depressed. The Anglican Church is, as we have shewn, an integral and pure branch of the Church Apostolic, and universal. But though good in theory, she is marred in practice; she is robbed of her rightful influence; her sphere of action is cramped and limited, for want of proper resources; her authority is denied: many of her most important provisions utterly neglected; and her services either unwarrantably altered, or irreverently slurred over—deprived of life and reality, and looked on as unsuitable to the age. The conventicle system has superseded the Church system. She is no longer a praying, but a mere preaching Church. But she is beginning to move and recover her former self. Only let her children aid her heartily in her efforts to re-occupy her true position, and, by the blessing of God, she may yet again pervade the nation with her wholesome influence.

And, first, *it is obviously most necessary to make the Church itself, physically and statistically, equal to the wants of the people.* Of late

years we have had, in many districts, but the skeleton of a Church, as compared with the population. Millions of souls have departed from her communion, or fallen into unbelief, by reason of her inability to comprehend them. We have to thank God that this drawback is beginning to be removed. Let but the church-building spirit proceed as it has begun, and we may hope, ere long, that means, at least, of worshipping God, and receiving the ordinances and instruction of religion, will be afforded to the people. A wide-spread opinion also prevails, and cannot be too often insisted on, that the Church can never be restored to its true and effective state, without a very large increase in the number of her ministers, whether Bishops, Priests, or Deacons. All acknowledge the parochial priesthood to be lamentably deficient in numbers. But an increased number of pastors and congregations requires a proportionate increase in the number of Bishops, if the Church system is to be duly carried out. It seems also most desirable, under the present circumstances of the country, that either licensed Catechists should be appointed, or else that the order of Deacons should be made, not as at present, a

mere step to the priesthood, but, in some degree, a distinct body—Subdeacons, perhaps, they might be called—who shall be employed in those various matters of parochial business to which the exertions of the Priest are wholly insufficient, compatibly with the more important duties of the Sanctuary.

A good deal has been said lately, in Parliament and elsewhere, about the preferableness of appointing ministers, to building churches. But the truth is, we want both; and the question to be considered is, how we shall best secure them both. If a church is built, we know from experience that a pastor will follow; but if a pastor be appointed first, it remains to be proved that a church will as certainly be built. Besides, the minister may be removed; but the church once planted will remain, and will not be suffered, for very shame's sake, to be long unoccupied. We suffer whole districts to remain without religious instruction, and think little of it; but once plant a church there, and the very fact of its being closed will stir up men's minds to endeavour to remedy the evil. If a given sum (suppose £3000) were all that could possibly be raised for a district, then it might be

admitted that a priest would be preferable to a church; but lay out the sum in building a fit church, and priest, school, parsonage, and all the rest, will soon spring up.

The building of churches, however, and the appointment of ministers, is only the beginning of what is needful. The principal thing is the service itself. We should take especial care that the church is made what it professes to be, a house of Prayer, according to the ritual of the Anglican Church. The service should be a solemn offering of humble devotion to God—a real and earnest participation in the ordinances and sacraments of the Gospel. It must not be a mere conventicle, or preaching-house. God forbid that I should say one word against the holy ordinance of preaching. All I maintain is, that, important as preaching is, yet the essential character of the house of God is that it should be “a house of Prayer,” where regenerated souls may resort to hold communion with God, and join together in the ordinances of religion; and so be led on daily in their Christian course, as well as reminded of their duty, and be taught to add to their faith, virtue, and every other Christian grace.

If the ministrations of the Church be the means of leading people on in their heavenward course ; if, not preaching only, but all the ordinances of religion in their due proportion conduce to this important end, then it is of very great importance, and this not only in new, but in old established churches, that such arrangements should be made as may promote reverence, and facilitate devotion. No thorough restoration of Christian worship can be made, until our churches are so ordered and arranged, that the spirit of our service may be carried out in them. If an amendment of our national character is to be effected, we cannot begin better than with our national churches.

Let us begin with the House of God. Let us make the church, in each parish, the centre of our operations. Let us see first that it is worthy of its object ; you can never succeed in establishing a reverent worship of God in a building where everything around is, from neglect, irreverent, mean and squalid. You must repair its shattered roof, remove the damp and dust from its walls, and take away those evidences of neglect which have so long been suffered to remain unheeded, pull down the

unsightly disfigurements of modern parsimony, and restore the sacred edifice to its ancient form and comeliness.

Let us be assured it is no unimportant object gained when the parish church is restored to a state of decency. Even the scorers and indifferent begin to see that we are in earnest. Next, in order to stir up a spirit of Christian fellowship, it is necessary that all Christian people in God's House should be treated with proper respect. God's House is "a House of Prayer for *all* people." How utterly inconsistent is it with true devotion or charity, to see a rich person, seated at his ease in the corner of a huge square pew, large enough to hold a dozen, when the poor are pushed aside into holes and corners, and accommodated with narrow comfortless seats, where they can neither sit, nor kneel, nor stand, without inconvenience. How truly ridiculous is it to see in the architect's plan for a new church, the rich man's seat made three feet six in width, while the poor man's is only two feet four! In some parish churches the encroachment of the pew holders is so great, that the poor people are positively excluded.

These things must no longer be allowed, if the

Church service is to be performed as it ought to be, and a right Christian fellowship in God's House promoted. The best arrangement is that open seats of ample dimensions, and with convenience for kneeling as well as sitting, should be provided *for all classes alike*. Nor does it follow that all the seats should be open to the first comers. We should guard against new abuses while we remedy those which exist, and consider the peculiarities of national habits and feelings. Some people are pushing and ill-mannered, and would place themselves where they ought not ; others are bashful and feel distressed, at having to search for places. Besides there is a natural wish in the members of a family to sit and kneel together. Therefore let the churchwardens assign particular seats to such families as are regular in their attendance, to be by them occupied, so long as they shall desire to do so. *There should be no galleries.* I do not go so far as to say that it is impossible to say one's prayers in a gallery, still the obvious associations connected with a gallery are, that you are there to hear rather than pray. Let galleries therefore be left to the conventicle, and banished from the church. Even a western

gallery for the organ and singers is highly objectionable, as having the appearance of an orchestra, and the singers seeming to be placed there to be listened to, not to lead the thanksgiving of the faithful. Let the singers be placed in the choir on opposite sides, and let the rest of the seats and kneelings be arranged so as to look that way. It is a sad drawback to the effectiveness of our English Cathedrals, that instead of the Clergy and members of the choir being grouped round the altar, on each side, according to the ancient custom, the laity have been placed between the altar and the choir; the consequence of which is, that the attention of the congregation is drawn in the wrong direction. It has always been the custom from the Apostolic times to turn to the east in prayer, and this custom is not at all connected either with the worship of images, or adoration of the host, having been in practice long before the adoption of those superstitions. Whether the early Christians supposed God's peculiar dwelling place, the Heaven of Heavens, to be in that direction; or whether they considered the glorious orb of day to be an apt emblem of that "Sun of Righteousness" who "arose with healing on

His wings;" or whether they believed that some Divine invisible Presence rested on the altar, as the Shechinah rested on the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies, certain it is that the worshipping towards the east, besides being an ancient custom, has a reverential and becoming effect. The feeling to be encouraged in our devotion is that of a present invisible Deity listening to every word we utter, and scrutinizing our inmost souls; mercifully disposed to receive our prayers with favour, but refusing to accept a mere perfunctory service. This feeling the Romanists think to promote by a visible representation of our Lord and Saviour placed above the altar. But, besides that this is in direct violation of the command of God, it seems obviously calculated to lower the tone of feeling, and destroy the notion of the spirituality and invisibility of the Divine Presence. Let the imagination be aided as much as you please by emblems presented to the eye; let the Cross itself, nay, the very nails fixed in their places, draw our thoughts to the contemplation of the one great and holy Sacrifice, for the sake of which alone our prayers are acceptable, but let *the marked absence of a graven image*, or any thing

which could be an object of worship, fix our minds on that pure and Holy Spirit, who though invisible to mortal eyes, yet is pleased to vouchsafe His especial Presence when two or three are gathered together in His Name.

But it is to the worship itself that our principal attention is demanded. It is no slight point gained to have decency and propriety preserved even in the structure of our Churches. It is another important thing to have them arranged like churches and not like conventicles—for praying and not only for listening. These things materially help our devotion; but they are but as the scaffolding of the building. Our main object both for our own and the Church's sake, is to give a life, an earnestness, a reality, to our Service, such as shall stir up our own dull hearts,—shall communicate a flame to those around us, and so be acceptable to our Heavenly Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. It is this reality in the service of God that is the grand desideratum. Every care should be taken, and every means employed, to promote this earnestness and true reverence. It is futile to say that, if we are truly pious, reverence will follow, for it is just 'this reverence which con-

tributes mainly to engender and advance our piety. Besides, the irreverence of some is a sore drawback to the reverence of others. When Christian worshippers witness irreverence around them, their own efforts at religious worship are thwarted and hindered. On the other hand, nothing is more diffusive than the spirit of true devotion. It spreads from soul to soul, drawing even the indifferent into the sacred vortex, and lighting up a heavenly flame in hearts which before had not been touched.

The first practical step towards promoting reverence in God's service, is that all the congregation should go to church with a fixed determination to join—*really to join*—in holy worship; and *that* in the words and way prepared for them in their Prayer Book. When they are at home they may use what words they please; but when they are assembled for common worship they should keep strictly and attentively to the formularies prepared for their common use.

There is one portion of the Service which admits of great improvement; but the improvement of which requires the exercise of zeal and taste,—that is the Psalmody, especially the

chaunting of the psalms and hymns. It is a portion of our worship in which all, or as many as possible, should join; and most desirable it is that congregations should endeavour to *qualify themselves* for the performance of this duty. The facilities for acquiring some skill in music seem to have been providentially introduced, at the time when the Church is restoring the spirit of her Services. The leading persons in a congregation should consider it a point of duty to set the example of doing their best in this respect. In some congregations a plan has been adopted to arrange before-hand what is to be the psalmody on each particular day in the year, so that they may practice at home, and come to church prepared to take their part, according to the best of their power, in God's appointed service. All this is as it should be; and is well calculated to infuse, and retain, a true spirit of devotion, and a feeling of the various excellencies of our Liturgy. Very great improvements are being made in different congregations. In some the Priest, aided by one or more of the choristers, chaunts the first verse of the psalm, and the whole congregation join in the second, and so proceed alternately. In others a few cho-

rists are ranged on each side of the choir ; and as they take up the alternate chaunt, the congregation join—not in a mass, but according to their situation on each side of the church. It is gratifying to observe what animation is given to our service by these hearty efforts to render to God the best worship we are able. Nothing will contribute more to retain the affections of our people, and to reclaim those who have fallen away to Dissent or Romanism than thus to carry out the spirit of our really beautiful service.

Were persons animated with this feeling, and prepared to worship God in spirit and in truth, we should hear no more complaints of the wearisomeness and tediousness of our Liturgy—there would be none of that anxiety to curtail it of its essential portions. If a congregation were really in earnest, and felt their position as members of the Christian Church, they would not grudge the time occupied in admitting a new member to God's family ; they would take a charitable interest in the Baptism of the poorest infant ; and while they sincerely joined in prayer, and called down God's blessing on the new member of the Church, they would,

at the same time, themselves be reminded, by the sacred ceremony, of their own position before God, and of their duties and privileges as members of the body of Christ.

The same spirit would prompt them to offer willingly of their substance to Almighty God according to His own command, and according to the ordinance of the Church. The weekly Offertory is a continually recurring claim on God's part that we yield Him a due portion of our substance. It is a blessed opportunity to the faithful, a spur to the lax, an unpleasant memento to the worldly and covetous. But if we can bring our congregations to be real worshippers of God, it will be hailed amongst the most important and essential portions of our service; especially in this time of the Church's urgent need, when so much temporal and spiritual destitution is around them; the rich will gladly accustom themselves to large and frequent offerings on the Altar of the Lord in His Name, and for His sake; and the poor will be encouraged each to add his mite towards the sacred offering.

The above remarks are made on the supposition that the Church service is to be continued

in its present general form, *i. e.*, the Morning Prayer, the Liturgy, and Communion services united according to the custom which now obtains. But I question whether this mixing-up of the three distinct Services into one be not itself a deviation from the intention of those who compiled our Liturgy. And whether, if an anxious desire were diffused in the Church to carry out the true spirit of the Service, and to worship God in the most acceptable manner, it would not be thought most consistent to divide the Morning Service into its component parts.¹

But what I desire principally to insist on is, the necessity that *all of us should do everything in God's service in the best manner we are able*, as the surest practical means open to us of reviving a religious spirit in the nation. What an entire difference would it make in the feel-

¹ On many accounts, it is far from desirable to make any alterations in our Services. Still, if any change is made, I would venture to express a doubt whether, in parishes where a daily service is performed, it be not superfluous to read, every day, the Exhortation, Confession, and Absolution. It is certainly desirable, if we hope to induce the working classes to attend, that our daily service should not be needlessly long; and it seems scarcely necessary to remind persons, who attend daily at God's House, what are the objects of their coming there.

ings of our children, for instance, whether our own, or those of our poorer neighbours, when we took them with us to church, if they saw everything conducted decently and in order—care taken that all things be done in the most reverent manner;—if, instead of seeing their elders and superiors lounging in pews and maintaining a cold, supercilious silence, they beheld them all joining with earnest devotion as if they believed that God were, as He is, actually present with them. The more I dwell on it, the more confident do I feel, that the restoration of reverence in our service, the making churches houses of Prayer, and not merely of preaching, is the keystone, or hinge, on which turns the whole question of advance or retrogression in religion.

CHAPTER XVI.

REMEDIES FOR EXISTING EVILS—CONTINUED.

BESIDES the ordinary service of the sanctuary, it is most necessary to bring the influence of the Church system to bear on the circumstances of society. At present, there is scarcely any recognition of the existence of a Church amongst us, beyond the acknowledged necessity of going to public worship on Sunday. During the rest of the week, religion, so far as the Church is concerned, is in abeyance. The beneficial influence of religion upon our social system will never be brought back, without the restoration of our *Fasts and Festivals*. From the earliest period these have formed an essential branch

of the Christian system ; they are largely recognized in the formularies of our own Reformed branch of the Church ; and yet, in vast numbers of places, they are utterly neglected, both by priests and people, insomuch, that multitudes of persons, in communion with the Anglican Church, are not aware of the existence of these parts of the system ; which, if rightly used, according to the directions of the Prayer Book, would occupy a very large and prominent place, and exercise a wholesome influence on our religious state.

Consider, first, the ordinance of *fasting*. An ordinance more strictly Scriptural—more decidedly sanctioned by the example of our Lord Himself, and His Apostles—more plainly in accordance with the practice of the holiest men, whether of the former or latter dispensation—more necessary for the present age, when thousands are spiritually dead, in luxury and self-indulgence ; in short, a more valuable and important ordinance cannot be named ; and yet, strange to say, by many of the clergy, and by a large body of the laity, this ordinance is not only neglected, but contemned. That men should neglect to do what they ought, is not surprising ; but

that they should have the effrontery to defend, and even glory in their neglect, is one of the most remarkable instances on record, of the manner in which deference to the world's opinion, and the influence of a faulty system, will blind men to their most obvious duty.

Until this ordinance of religion be restored, it is futile to look for improvement, either in individual holiness, or national piety. Men are being destroyed by excess of wealth, and ease, and comfort; amassing riches, acquiring consequence, devoting themselves to the pursuits of ease and refinement; and not a few ruining themselves by positive over eating and drinking; not, perhaps, so as to be liable to the charge of intemperance, but still so as to clog and sensualize both body and soul. To correct these flagrant evils, the Church provides her simple remedy; but the world scornfully rejects it. The Church appoints certain days of fasting and abstinence, on which, by self-denial in small things, for religion's sake, we may learn to control our lusts, and passions, and appetites, and make those sacrifices which are required of us.¹

¹ The following is the Collect for the Second Sunday in Lent: "O Lord, who for our sake didst fast forty days and

The Church bids men fast for their souls' health; but the world says, "No; we would rather sit in our pews, and hear the sermon. We do not feel disposed to fast; it is not the fashion of the day. You tell us, 'faith cometh by hearing,' and, if we have faith, all will be well. Tell us, then, of Christ's sufferings; tell us, while we sit comfortably in our pews, of all that He hath done and endured for us; paint them in your most eloquent language; then we shall believe. What more do you require of us?" Alas! is not this the religion of the majority, and do not the Clergy themselves most faithlessly pander to this spirit, and suppress the true doctrine of the Cross, and even dare to scoff at it. How seldom do you hear, in many pulpits, any allusion to fasting, except with a passing sneer at the Pharisees for fasting twice a-week. And so the wealthy and well-doing of forty nights, give us grace to *use such abstinence*, that our flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we may ever obey Thy godly motions in righteousness and true holiness, to Thy honour and glory, Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen." This demonstrates, beyond a question, that our Church means by fasting, what the Church always has meant, actual self-denial, or limitation of our food, and not *only* a spiritual fast.

the land are deceived to their ruin; the ordinance of God is, as it were, snatched from their hands by the Church's Ministers, and men are unprepared either for prosperity or adversity. If their prosperity continue, they will go to their account, without knowing, or having heard, what it is to take up their cross, or suffer tribulation. If evil days come, and their luxuries are taken from them, they will not know where to turn—they will be sunk in despondency—they will curse God and die. It is impossible to describe, in too strong terms, the perilous state of multitudes of professing Christians—hearers of the Word, but not doers of it—in consequence of the extraordinary dereliction of duty of their appointed teachers, with regard to this most necessary and important ordinance. In nothing does the unsoundness of the conventicle, or evangelical system appear more evidently, than this unaccountable tampering with an important ordinance, in direct opposition to the injunction of the Church—to the written Word of God—to the practice of the most holy men, of every age; yea, of Him who left us an example that we should follow His steps, and declared, “if any man will come

after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."

If the Anglican Church is ever to regain her holiness and energy, one essential requisite is the restoration of this neglected ordinance of *fasting*.

It is very difficult to decide exactly what is the right mode of fasting. Some persons entirely abstain from food on fast days, until three o'clock, and then consider the fast to be ended. Such, at least, we may charitably suppose, is the mode of fasting adopted by those high dignitaries of the Church who dine at the Lord Mayor's feast, and other banquets, on fast days. Others deem it more fitting to exercise a partial abstinence during the whole day, altogether declining society, beyond their own family circle, where they may practise what mode of abstinence they please. To lay down precise rules is almost impossible, on account of the variety of persons, circumstances, and differences of health. To some, absolute fasting might be death. Others, who are poor, seldom have more food than is required to sustain the necessary strength for their labour.

It will occur to many, that in the present state of society some inconvenience would arise from fasting. Our domestic habits, and still more our social enjoyments, would be interfered with. "How ridiculous," some will say, "when we have an invitation to dinner, to have to look at the Church Calendar, and see whether it is a fast day! How many pleasant engagements we shall have to decline, and what are we to say when people ask us? We cannot say we stay at home because it is a fast day—we should be laughed at." Now I am persuaded that this slight inconvenience itself is one of the advantages of the system. Religion *ought* to regulate our daily lives. We *ought* to make our social engagements bend to our duty. Are there not six days in the week, or at least five, on any of which we may have our dinner parties, or other festivities? Let a few persons of rank and influence resolutely set their faces against the desecration of the Church's ordinance by feasting instead of fasting, and it would soon come to be understood that when people invited their friends to an entertainment, they ought first to consult the Church Calendar; and that to ask a strict Churchman to dinner on a fast-day,

was as much as to say they did not want to see him. And then consider only the funds which might be devoted to relieving the wants of the poor. If rich people, in London, for instance, would but devote their Friday's dinner, or the cost of it, to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, how soon might the voice of complaining be banished from our streets, and the starving poor be raised up from the dust. *It is scarcely possible to devise a more obviously beneficial plan, whether to relieve the crying wants of the poor, or save the rich from the sensualizing effects of their abundant wealth, than the simple return to the Church's ordinance of fasting.*¹

¹ I am inclined to think, that the plan here suggested, would be both practicable and beneficial in many ways, if generally adopted. Suppose only that the multitudes of families who now sit down every day to a plentiful meal, were to deny themselves their joint of meat on Fridays, and give it on the Sundays to certain poor people equal in number to themselves; and on vigils were to do the same, and give what was saved to the poor on the next day's festival; this, I think, would be better than giving the same amount in money, or on other days. It would mark not the Fasts only, but the Festivals. The poor would understand the reason of the bounty bestowed on them. Moreover, it would be strictly according to the letter, as well as spirit, of holy Scripture. "Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to deal thy bread to the hungry: and that thou bring the

It is not to be supposed, however, that the system of the Church is of so strict and austere a character as to consist of asceticism and self-mortification. It requires indeed for the discipline, and even safety of its members, the exercise of self-denial; but it also encourages, at times convenient, a holy joy and festivity. *The Church has not only its Fasts but its Festivals.* It spread its hallowing influence over our joys as well as sorrows, it sanctifies our hearts at all times with its holy ordinances. But this branch of our Church system is, like the other, disused and disregarded by the same worldly influence. Men will not admit religion as a guest to their feasts, and so their feasts are ungodly, sensual, and worldly. In truth, we have been so long disused to religious festivals, that we do not know how to keep them. To go to church in the morning of a Saint's day, unless, indeed, there were an eloquent preacher, (and by many even then) would be looked on as distasteful

poor that are cast out to thy house." (Isaiah lviii. 6, 7.) Surely the precept "deal *thy* bread to the hungry," is not a mere recommendation to charity, but means that we are to give to the hungry *what we should otherwise have eaten ourselves.*

and dull—a breaking in upon their worldly business and amusements. It would seem like keeping fast instead of festival. We have lost the notion of religious joy. The service of God seems to throw a gloom and heaviness over the whole day. But it is most desirable again to connect the Church with our times of festivity, and to introduce a jubilant and joyous tone into such of our services as are suitable to it. To the adult portion of our population the attempt would seem strange and unnatural, owing to the gloom with which they have been accustomed to regard religion. We must begin with our children, who, being naturally of joyous temperament, might be led to enter into the spirit of such a revival. Almost the only remnant which we have of a religious feast is Christmas-day. We might work upon this foundation. We might deck our churches with evergreens or flowers, and render the music of our services joyous and exulting. A procession of children might be formed from the school-house ; the sermon might be made so as to accustom Christian people to think and speak of the departed saints as brethren in the faith—living members of the Church universal ; and so far from lead-

ing men to the errors of Popery, it would be a most fit occasion, in commemorating the virtues of the saints, and exhorting men to imitate them, at the same time to warn the congregation that they were but created beings like ourselves, and that anything approaching to worship would be a sin against the law of God.

It was the custom, in ancient times, to recite to the people the deeds of saints and martyrs on the days of their festivals. This was done chiefly when they assembled at their tombs, in particular places, and is not generally applicable. However, those Clergy who have the talent of speaking popularly and attractively, may very properly avail themselves of this faculty to give interest to the festivals. Those who have not this gift must devise some other means. The early Christians did not fail to avail themselves of these days for deeds of charity. "On these solemnities," says Bingham, "they met together, both clergy and people, inviting the poor and needy, refreshing the widows and orphans; that so their festivity might not only be a memorial of the happy state of the deceased, but in respect of themselves also, an odour of sweet smell in the sight of God." Thus, they made

“sober feasts for the relief of the poor, and such as stood in need of their assistance.”

The restoration of Festivals would be a most efficient method of retaining the attachment of the youth of both sexes to the Church; which is one of our greatest desiderata. Too often we lose sight of them, when they leave the Sunday school. Religion is connected, in their eyes, with dulness and restraint; but make it more cheerful — associate it with some degree of interest and chastened excitement—invite the young men and maidens to return to the school of their childhood, and give their aid in the religious festivity, and you will have put in operation a very efficient instrument for cherishing their feelings of attachment. There are parishes, though I fear but few, where this influence is retained by the Church over her young adults, and it is mainly through means analogous to these.

Thus might a holiday-keeping generation be trained up, and the Church be again enabled to convey her sanctifying influence to our festive rejoicings. Conceive, also, what a powerful effect might be wrought by the prudent observance of the Church's Festivals, to break down

the spirit of exclusiveness between rich and poor—to unite young and old, parents and children, clergy and people. What an instrument to humanize the intercourse of the lower orders. What an opportunity for the exercise of charity and good-will. *Truly there is more than human wisdom in the Church's system, if we knew but how to use it.* Deeply degraded as the nation is, it might yet be restored by the means which God has given us. But it will be said that all this savours of Popery. Never mind what it savours of, if it be not so really. Let us take heed that we walk according to God's laws, and the requirement of that Church, of which His Providence has made us members; and do not let us trouble ourselves with what concerns us not.

Another thing, which must not be omitted as absolutely necessary to restore our Church to what she should be, is *a more confidential intercourse between ministers and people*—the habit of seeking direction and spiritual help, on the one hand; and, on the other, the ability to afford advice in those numerous cases of conscience which continually occur; and especially

in assisting the penitent in his return to God. The best sort of clergyman, in modern estimation, is one who preaches an interesting sermon, so as to keep his fashionable hearers from yawning, and looks well to the poor—is active on committees for soup and blankets, clothing clubs, and so forth ; and so has a tolerably good congregation of all classes. All this is good as far as it goes ; but it is not the whole, nor the principal part, of a priest's duty. Few, especially amongst the upper and middle classes, ever think, at least while in health, of consulting their Priest on the state of their souls. I do not mean that, at present, if a parishioner were to consult his Clergyman, the latter would not be ready to give the best advice he was able ; but, I apprehend, that in a great many instances that advice would be very inefficient. We have been accustomed to think that all that is necessary is to “deliver the message of salvation”—to tell people that they are great sinners, and, consequently, in a dangerous state, and that what they have to do is to believe in Christ, and to think that, when this is done, all is safe. We have been so unaccustomed, except in cases of sickness, when often it may be too late, to

guide the tender conscience—to direct each person what to do, in order to kindle or cherish godliness in his soul, and to apply the medicine of the Gospel to individual cases,—that much is required to be learned by us in this department of ministerial duty; and a habit re-established in the people of resorting to the Ministers of religion for the relief of their conscience, and the guidance of their steps. This, of course, will be called, according to modern prejudices, an attempt at priestly interference and domination. Again, I say, never mind what it is called by the prejudiced or designing, so you have the authority of the Bible, and the instruction of the Church.

In short, that which is required, is to bring the ministrations of the Church prominently forward, and incorporate them with the daily interests of men. Instead of the Church Service being, as it is now, a mere hebdomadal ceremony, dissociated from all our ordinary habits, our daily habits should be moulded by the Church. The Church should not be forced to yield, as it does, to the usages of society; but society should adapt itself to the Church. Christmas-day, Lady-day, Michaelmas-day, are

still the traditional evidences of a time when daily life was guided by the ordinances of God.¹ Let us hope to see the time when the Church Almanack shall again, in some degree, regulate our social habits ; and religion shall be brought continually before us, not as a gloomy, un-social thing, but as mingling cheerfully with all our occupations and interests. It is, in truth, the leaven whereby alone the social system can be saved from corruption, and be rendered acceptable to our Father in Heaven.

¹ There is a remarkable instance at Lichfield of the manner in which the Church has been found to give way to the world. The principal fair takes place on Ash Wednesday ; and, until lately, *Ash Wednesday has been put off to the next week !*

CHAPTER XVII.

PROSPECTS OF THE CHURCH.

A FEW years ago there seemed a reasonable hope that the English Church would have righted herself, and reassumed her true position, without having to pass through any serious or lengthened struggle. When reminded of her high claims and privileges as the Spouse of Christ, she seemed to awaken to a sense of her condition: and when told of her glaring departure from the spirit and letter of her own laws, there appeared to be a candid acknowledgement of the truth of the impeachment which her best friends brought against her, and very evident symptoms of a readiness to return to the old path.

But these fair hopes have been disappointed, though not destroyed. So many difficulties and

obstacles have arisen, that it is manifest the restoration of the English Church must be the work of time, and liable to reverses. One of the principal causes of the hesitation which even good Churchmen feel in proceeding with the career of improvement, is the conduct of some of those who have been amongst the most prominent advocates of the movement. It is a sad example of human infirmity, that men, whose learning, ability and piety, seemed to mark them out as amongst the chief instruments of Divine Providence to restore their Church to its integrity, should have been carried away from their high object by the very eagerness of their zeal, until at length they have dared to despise the mother who has nurtured them. Yet so, alas! it is. For a while charity forbade that we should believe the possibility of such a change. The occasional occurrence of harsh and disrespectful sayings, respecting the English Church, were set down as paradoxes, or hasty expressions, of men hurried on by a pardonable enthusiasm; or a dutiful, though ill-regulated, sorrow for defects in one they loved; and their friends were unwilling to admit the possibility that those who had once appeared the Church's

most devoted champions were really tainted with disloyalty. And now that the fact is too notorious to be questioned, when the noblest minds have been beguiled, and led on, step by step, (as many noble minds have been in various ages) to doubt the grounds of their faith, until they seem approaching the limits either of absolute submission to human authority, or else (if God defend them not) of positive scepticism, or doubt of all truth—when such a shipwreck of faith seems impending,¹ a sorrowful alarm is caused in the ranks of those who once marched together as allies: men look one at another and know not whom to trust; and the opponents gather fresh strength and push their advantage. The mischief done to the cause of the Church, by such excesses, is incalculable. The zealous advocates of Church principles find themselves suspected, and their exertions paralyzed. Yet have they but one course to pursue,—that is, to declare their unabated attachment to their mother Church, to cling more closely to her than ever, and appeal to the good sense of those

¹ I have never believed, and never *will* believe, that any of the writers of the Tracts for the Times will separate themselves from their mother Church.

who seek after the truth, that the excesses of a few are not to be laid to the charge of those who never, in thought, word, or deed, have swerved from their allegiance.

Certainly, to those who judge hastily, the failure of individuals, who, though few in number, are of weight in respect of their zeal and ability, is a *primâ facie* argument against the principles which they have been supposed to advocate. But the argument is of more plausibility than weight. The truth is, that it could not have been otherwise without a miracle. When did it ever happen, in any considerable change of opinion or habit, that some did not run into extremes? What, though some unstable persons have even fallen into the snares of Rome, and others have, in their writings and proceedings, shewn a manifest tendency in the same direction, surely that is no substantial reason why the acknowledged principles and formularies of our Church should continue in abeyance. Though some, when convinced of the error of their low and latitudinarian views, have run into the contrary extreme, that is no reason why we should cease to advocate the true *via media*. I do not see that those who have all

along kept to the strict limits of their own Church, ought to go back one inch from the ground they have taken. Still, unquestionably, the excesses of some have caused a serious prejudice against the truth, which will not be removed, but by a persevering advocacy of the real principles of the English Church.

But if well-meaning persons have been scared by the fear of Popery, the same motive has been dishonestly used by others to prejudice uninstructed persons against the Church itself. Such is the extreme ignorance, on these subjects, into which the majority of men have fallen, that they are led, by designing persons, to reject the fundamental principles of their own Church, under the notion that they savour of Popery. The doctrine of Regeneration, on which the whole Baptismal Service is based—the Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist, distinctly enunciated in the Catechism—the Apostolic Succession, which is the leading doctrine of our Ordination Services—the observance of Fasts and Festivals, so undeniably enjoined by the Reformers of our Prayer Book,—these principles and practices of the English Church have been attacked, under the plea of their being Popish; and some of the

Evangelical Clergy, having to deal with congregations of their own teaching, have, by the unworthy use of this weapon, caused a considerable prejudice against the true doctrines of the Anglican Church.

Another very objectionable method which some members of the same party have adopted, is to avail themselves of the worldly and self-indulgent habits of the present generation, to render them inimical to a system, which requires from them exertion and self-sacrifice. If one school bids men fast, and give largely of their goods to the poor ; and another tells them that fasting is unnecessary, and that they had better keep their money for themselves,—it is not difficult to foresee which body of Divines will be most popular with men of this present world.

One of the luckiest events for the opponents of Church restoration is the case of the Offertory. It has arrayed the world on their side. The weekly Offertory is a weekly protest against Mammon. Each Sunday, it reminds the worldling that he must part with his money, or with his hopes of heaven. “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth.” “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be ready to

give, and glad to distribute." "Give alms of thy goods, and never turn thy face from any poor man." Zaccheus said, "Behold, *the half of my goods* I give to the poor." Such is the language of the Offertory; and this call is to be obeyed at once. The preacher often says hard things, and demands sacrifices; but then he does not at once test our obedience; he does not require immediate performance of the duty enjoined; but the Offertory proclaims the Scriptural duty of alms-giving, and at the same time holds forth the plate for the reception of the alms. And what is more provoking still to the worldly man, it does not give him his *quid pro quo*; he receives nothing apparently for his money; no, not the poor satisfaction of seeing his name in the list of contributors. Not even his left hand knoweth what his right hand giveth. These are sore grievances to the slave of Mammon. His worldly spirit rebels against the Church's claim, and for the sake of this one point, he joins in the opposition to the restoration of the usages of the Church, which, otherwise, he would have viewed with indifference. We wish the Evangelicals joy of their new allies.

It might have been supposed, that those

Clergy who, at the risk of obloquy, restored the rules of the Church, and conscientiously set themselves to fulfil their engagements, would have been cordially supported by those in authority, and that those who opposed them would have been censured. And such, in some instances, has been the case. Several of our Bishops have expressed their approbation of those who have aided in bringing forward forgotten truth, and have given them their decided sanction. The following is an extract from a letter, recently published by the Bishop of Exeter, with reference to the restoration of the Offertory, which, it seems, in some parishes, had been opposed by the congregations. "The law," he says, in answer to the churchwardens of a certain parish, "the law by which your minister is bound to regulate his ministrations, requires him to read some portion of the Offertory, whenever any part of the Communion Service is read, whether the Holy Sacrament be administered or not; and he is no more at liberty to omit this portion of the Service than any other. For the same reason, I have no more right 'to command the discontinuance of the Offertory' (as you suggest), than I have to forbid the sermon. It

may be very true that the use of this part of Divine Service had, contrary to law, been long omitted; and it is, therefore, much to the praise of your new Minister, that he has determined to do his duty in this particular, whatever may have been the conduct of his predecessors. If a large portion, or any portion of the parishioners be decidedly opposed to the use of the Offertory, they must have very strange notions of their duty, as Churchmen, or Christians. That Offertory was enjoined in order that they might have an opportunity of contributing weekly, as is prescribed by the Apostle to the Corinthians, (1 Cor. xvi. 2) to the relief of their poor brethren, or to 'such other pious and charitable uses as their minister and churchwardens shall think fit.' If they are ashamed to hear the sentences of Holy Scripture, calling on them to perform a duty which they wilfully and resolutely decline, then, indeed, their leaving the Church is sufficiently accounted for. But on any other supposition it is absolutely unintelligible; for they cannot be so weak as to imagine that they have a right to require their minister to fly in the face of the Church's direction, and make him refuse to give the well-

disposed part of the congregation (be it large or small) the prescribed opportunity of doing their duty to God and man, because they, forsooth, are determined not to do it."

What the Bishop here says of the Offertory is strictly applicable to those other portions of the services and formularies of the Church which have of late years been suffered to fall into disuse. The misfortune is, that some of our Bishops, alarmed it may be by the opposition of a few party men amongst the Clergy, or a few noisy vestry men, have shrunk from supporting those who desired to conform to the regulations of the Church, and have rested on the most untenable ground, that the existing practice, whatever it may be at any given time, and not the book of formularies, to which all the Clergy have given their solemn promise to adhere, is the rule by which we are to be guided. This vacillation in our rulers is the most serious blow which the Church-restorers have experienced; because, by their own principles, they are constrained to pay great deference to Episcopal authority. It is, however, surely not presumptuous or disrespectful to assert that the grave decision of a synod of all the English

Bishops, by whom our formularies were arranged, and the regulations by them made, and sworn to by every Clergyman, and agreed to, on the part of the laity, by Act of Parliament, must be regarded as of more weight than the private opinion of individual Bishops. There is no power in the English Church like that claimed by the Pope of Rome, to dispense with solemn vows and engagements. *The injunction of a single Bishop, in opposition to the order of the Church itself, can be in no way binding on an individual Clergyman.*

At the same time, great deference is due to their "godly judgments and admonitions;" and, if we may say so with respect, great allowance must be made for their prepossessions, for the unwillingness with which men, at a certain time of life, modify their opinions, and for the difficulty of the position in which they are placed as mediators between contending parties, and, in some degree, guardians of the peace. On the other hand, our Spiritual rulers would do well, on their part, to consider the feelings of many of their clergy, as well as the rising generation of laity, the large majority of whom, at least the religious amongst them, have a decided bias

to Church principles. If, in deference to the feelings of older men of the present generation, existing abuses are for a time tolerated, this ought, surely, to be no hindrance to that return to sounder practice, which is sure to be demanded when the now rising generation has arrived at man's estate. Let it only be admitted that the order contained in the Prayer Book is the rule by which the Church is bound, and that such order ought to be restored, when practicable, then the time and the manner of restoring it may be matter of serious deliberation. It may be allowed that, even where irregularities and mutilations of the Church services exist, it would not be right to make abrupt and sweeping changes without due notice and explanation to the people. The nature of the alteration required should be duly explained; it should be clearly shewn that they form portions of the Church's ordinances, by which all Ministers, as well as congregations, are bound. In the present state of irritation, especially, great discretion should be used, and much allowance made for prejudice. Plain men do not like to be told that they, and their fathers before them, have been, in any degree, mistaken. It is a

good, honest, conservative feeling—conservative in a good sense—to desire to abide by what we have received from those before us. It is a position which we do not desire to see abandoned, until it be clearly shewn that it is, in reality, a departure from our duty. Besides, the present generation has learned to think itself the model of wisdom, a notion which is only just beginning to give way. The Church itself, also, has been much to blame in suffering its ritual to fall into disuse: congregations have only followed the evil practice in which they have been brought up. Moreover, party feeling has been excited on the subject. False, indeed, has been the step taken by those who have earned for themselves a temporary popularity by pandering to the prejudices of their flocks, and resisting amendment and restoration of the Church's discipline, *which must come at last*. The prejudice thus excited will, it may be hoped, subside in due time, if it be treated with mingled firmness and moderation. In new churches a favourable opportunity is afforded for the introduction of the services unmutilated, where no contrary practices have obtained. Let all new churches be, from the first, adapted to

the pure Anglican service ; let them be arranged in the proper mode for conveniently worshipping God, according to our Liturgy ; and the superior decency and propriety of the arrangement will be so apparent, that the congregations of old churches will not be satisfied that they should remain in the present unseemly state. There are, also, many restorations which a Clergyman may make without interfering in the slightest degree with any of the members of his congregation. For instance, he may at once restore the Festival Services, or increase the frequency of Communion. None can have a shadow of right to complain of such proceedings ; for none are forced to join in them against their will. But in arrangements which affect the usual Sunday congregations, and jar on their prejudices, more time might be reasonably allowed. Only let there be a sincere intention of conforming to the true discipline of the Church, and restoring her mutilated services, as soon as it can be done without unnecessary offence or party strife, and this important change may surely and steadily be effected.

And let us be well assured, that *it is no mere question of rubrics or ordinances, but is closely*

connected with the restoration of vital religion, both in the hearts of individuals, and in the Church at large. The Church of God is, as we cannot too often repeat, the instrument for leavening the world with holiness, and inducing men to live in the fear of God. But we find the generation in which we live a mass of corruption and ungodliness. And why is this? Because, though we have a Church, sound in doctrine, Apostolic in descent, endowed with high privileges, true Sacraments, ancient Creeds, primitive ordinances, yet silently and imperceptibly, in the course of years, innovations and corruptions have crept in amongst us, and the miasma of irreverence has spread its noxious mantle around us. We are in an evil case; and nothing bnt the faithful recurrence to the ordained means of grace—the pure and holy system of God's sacred institution for the salvation of mankind—can restore us to health and safety.

God be praised, a reaction is at work amongst us. We must not omit to mention with thankfulness the very marked change which has taken place in the language and conduct even of many of those who are most opposed, as a party, to

Church principles—a change affording evidence, that those principles are irresistible in themselves; and also the hope that the more able and honest of the Evangelicals will gradually modify their views, until they find that little or no difference really exists between them, and those to whom they fancied themselves opposed.

To be sure, the unconscious lodgement of truth, in the minds of low Churchmen, is accompanied by inconsistencies which now and then provoke a smile, and shew how little their newly acquired notions agree with former principles. Some will admit the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, accompanying it with a grave admonition, that we are not to *trust for salvation to the mere outward ordinance* of Baptism, if we afterwards live faithless and ungodly lives—as if such a notion ever entered into the mind of any man, woman, or child; or as if there were any such thing as a *mere outward* ordinance of baptism—this sacrament, consisting, as every school child is taught, of “*two parts, the outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace,*” without *both* of which no baptism exists.

Others of them have discovered that the ordinances of the Church may be usefully recom-

mended as means of grace, and even see no positive impropriety in keeping Fasts and Festivals; but the admission is sure to be accompanied by a solemn warning against their abuse. Congregations are exhorted not to put their trust in ordinances, many of whom, perhaps, are not seen at church more than once a week, and whose only notion of Fasts and Festivals is that Christmas-day and Good Friday are to be kept as supernumerary Sundays. Really, this is about as reasonable, as if the chaplain of a poor house were to preach to the inmates against luxurious living. The extraordinary mistake of the Evangelicals is this:— They find the Pharisees reprov'd for fasting *ostentatiously and boastfully*; and this they apply to persons who fast privately, on the days ordered in the Prayer Book; and so discourage fasting altogether. They find them censured for making long prayers in the corners of the streets, and synagogues. This they consider conveying a reproof to those Christians who say the prayers ordered to be said in church. Again, they find in the Epistles many cautions against the notion entertained by the early Jewish converts to Christianity, that it was necessary for them to maintain the cere-

monial law of Moses,—circumcision, and so forth. These cautions against a relapse into the ordinances of a system, *which our Lord had fulfilled and abolished*, they most strangely apply to those whose object is to induce men to act up to the *existing ordinances of the Christian Church, of which they are members*—ordinances to the use of which, many of us, by oath, and all by religious obligation, are pledged. It is one of the most remarkable fallacies of modern days. I defy any one to find, in Scripture, any single precept which militates against the moderate and simple ordinances of the Church of England. On the contrary, there are innumerable passages which enjoin a faithful obedience to what is commanded. “But, then,” say the Evangelicals, “you must not regard them as *meritorious or expiatory*.” But who ever said they were meritorious or expiatory? You are fighting against a shadow. The whole tenor of the writings of High Churchmen is to recommend the ordinances of the Church, partly as duties to which we are pledged by our profession, partly as means of obtaining grace; channels through which God vouchsafes His spiritual aid. We all believe and acknowledge, in com-

mon with you, and in the fullest and most unequivocal manner, that the blood of our Redeemer is the sole meritorious and expiatory cause of man's salvation. No one ever dreamed of setting anything in competition with it.

Evangelicals are, we trust, beginning to see that their jealousy of ordinances is misplaced and superfluous, and that to denounce those of their brethren, who conform more strictly than themselves to the Church of which both are members, is the height of injustice, as well as inconsistency. Let us hope that, in time, they will be led to acknowledge that they themselves cannot, in common propriety, disobey or neglect the rules and enactments of their own Mother Church. I am bound to admit, that, when Evangelicals are convinced of the propriety of changes, they are commonly more conscientious in making them than others—more ready to set about what they feel to be their duty, and less disposed to make unworthy concessions to clamour. And it is because I believe Evangelicals to be in the main honest and conscientious men, that I look hopefully to their gradual union with those whose sole aim is to restore their common Church to its true efficiency; only let them

divest themselves of the incubus of party spirit; let the conscientious among them eschew the factious proceedings of their party, and we need not despair of seeing them foremost in the ranks of those who fight under the Church's banner.

The gradual approximation of conscientious men is one amongst many favourable symptoms of the present time. Nor is there any reason to be disheartened by the appearance, in some quarters, of successful opposition. We must expect many drawbacks and difficulties; yet let us not despair of seeing at length a thorough reformation. It is a movement in which the slightest progress is so much ground gained. It is not like a political struggle, in which nothing is secured, until the balance of power is changed; but, in the present movement in the Church, even as in the first establishment of the Kingdom of Christ, the advocates of truth must be content to work under great discouragement and contradiction. It would be an evil sign, if they encountered not the world's opposition; they must be prepared for it, and form their hopes, and take their measures, accordingly. They must not be surprised if many, who went with them when the course seemed fair, are

found to waver, and fall off. Still they must persevere, in spite of difficulties, and be satisfied with small advances and slow improvement. The restoration of Church order in the poorest parish—the revival of reverence and earnestness in a single congregation—a single church freed from desecration—a single ordinance restored—attention paid to the smallest decoration or re-arrangement—every thing, in short, that tends to shew the least advance in a reverent feeling, and right use of the Church's ordinances, and return to a concern about the worship of God,—must be hailed with joy, as a certain step in advance—a hopeful symptom of the reviving sense of true religion.

Let none, therefore, be disheartened. Uninterrupted success is neither to be expected, nor is it even to be desired. It would be sure to lead to elation and ill-advised security. The favour of the worldly would deteriorate the value of what is gained. To secure the countenance of the world, we should have to follow the bad example of others, in the suppression of unacceptable doctrine. From this the Church restorer must keep himself clear. There are ample means in store for the recommendation of

his views. In the Church system, rightly developed, there is enough to captivate the highest intellect, and purest taste, as well as to satisfy the most ardent piety. The mysterious connexion of the Church universal—the communion of Saints—the hallowed union of the past, the present, and the future—the oneness of the Universal Church, centering in Christ, through the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship—its miraculous preservation, through the revolution of ages,—all these are topics which may well kindle the enthusiasm of the highest intellects. Its wonderful adaptation to the wants of the humbled sinner—its expansion through the social mass—its power of affording support to the weak, comfort to the broken-hearted, and pardon to the sinner—these considerations are calculated to win the hearts of the humble and penitent; while the tasteful objects with which the Church system has ever been accompanied; the unsurpassed beauty and suitableness of her architecture; the solemn fervour of her services,—all adapt themselves to the pure taste of the uncorrupted heart. In no point of view is the Church system more attractive, than in its appeal to the best feelings of parents for their

children, when it gives them their little ones purified from the baptismal font, no longer children of wrath, but really and truly children of grace, God's own adopted children ; and bids them nurture them in the ways of godliness, assuring them that there is a Divine Spirit within their infant souls, which, if duly cherished, will preserve them from the snares and miseries of sin. What parent, who is himself walking with Christ, will not joyfully accept this blessed assurance. Who, that has himself once fallen under Satan's power, will not thankfully receive the means of saving his child from the struggles and miseries which he has himself experienced. All these inducements should be diligently employed to recommend the Church system, against the ungenial, tasteless, unimaginative, unrefined system of Puritanism. But we must not seek to conceal the harder and less attractive portion of our system—the need of self-denial—the need of making religion paramount in the system of life. We must accept no converts in ignorance of what they are undertaking, when they propose to themselves a faithful conformity to the Anglican Church.

That it runs counter to modern notions, and

habits we must not attempt to conceal. That, indeed, is its chief value—to work a beneficial change and renovation in our corrupted system—to raise the poor from the depths of degradation, to save the rich from their debasing self-indulgence, and to infuse the spirit of Christianity into our every day duties and feelings. These are the high objects for which we labour, and in whatsoever degree they are accomplished amongst us, we rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONCLUSION,—PERSONAL CONSIDERATIONS.

IN the foregoing pages, while defending the Anglican Church as she exists in her authentic formularies, it has been deemed dishonest, nay, impossible, to deny the very great practical corruptions, and variations from her laws and spirit, which have been suffered to exist. Indeed, one principal object has been to aid in the endeavour to bring about their reformation.

Before concluding, I would take a brief survey of the question, as it affects the duty of individuals amongst us.

We find ourselves placed by Divine Providence, as members of a religious community,

which professes, and is able to prove itself, to be a branch of the Church Catholic, founded by Christ our Lord upon the earth. Its Ministers shew that they have God's authority to instruct us, and administer to us the Sacraments of the Gospel. We find, moreover, prepared for us, a grave and solemn Liturgy, which, on Sundays, is read in our churches, and is ordered to be read every day. The whole is sanctioned by the authority of the State, and by the adherence of many wise and good men—the best and wisest, indeed, of living, as well as of past generations. In short, the system in which God has placed us, comes recommended by many strong claims, and many cogent arguments.

On the other hand, we find it assailed by objections. The Dissenters on one side, and the Romanists on the other, are endeavouring to draw off members from the Anglican Church; and it may be that some amongst ourselves, and those not the least sincere and conscientious, do not feel that inward satisfaction, and religious peace, which they might expect under the wings of their mother Church. Some, it may be, do not find in the Minister set over

them that friend and holy adviser to whom they can, with satisfaction, open their minds, and confess their griefs and difficulties. Others, perhaps, painfully experience a want of devotion in our services; others feel aggrieved by the unfrequent recurrence of them. To use a common expression, their souls are "starved" for want of nutriment. In short, though no palpable fault can be alleged against the theory of our Church, yet, in practice, they do not experience from it that consolation and spiritual aid which they desire.

Now, to persons troubled with these thoughts, I would suggest the following considerations, which may help to keep them from taking any serious and dangerous step, that might be fatal to their everlasting welfare.

First, that whatever practical faults exist in our Church, the same exist in greater measure elsewhere; or, if not the same in greater measure, there are others of a worse character. If we feel disheartened by the irreverence and carelessness with which, in too many churches, the service of God is performed, the undue exaltation of preaching, the little regard to devotion, the curtailed services, and other sad defects, let

us consider that, in dissenting places of assembly, all these evils are commonly found in a far greater degree. Such defects, in our own Church, are contrary to her true spirit; they are but instances of the natural tendency to schismatical practices, which have arisen from our unfortunate contiguity with evil example. If we think to avoid these evils, by flying to Rome, a little reflection, or observation, will shew that we should not mend our condition. Irreverence, though it may be in a different form, prevails amongst them, as with ourselves. Practices directly contrary to God's law, are tolerated and sanctioned; and the very Sacrament, ordained by Christ Himself, for our spiritual food, is most wickedly and presumptuously mutilated.

Again, if some there may be, who find little satisfaction from the intercourse of their appointed minister, it may safely be asserted, that the minister of many a dissenting congregation, and the pastor of many a Romanist parish, are not one whit more capable of administering spiritual consolation. Blots there will be, and blots, I fear, are numerous in every Church or community in Christendom. We must beware

of indulging in romantic imaginations, and allowing a fancied perfection elsewhere, which does not exist, to beguile us away from the real comforts, and spiritual aids, which our own Church, with all its practical defects, is able to afford to those who faithfully seek them. Especially let us correct our restless tendencies, by the consideration *that we are in the place manifestly assigned to us by Almighty God*. We are members of the Church, which His providence has planted in the land, and may not leave it so long as it affords to us the means of grace. We may not leave it; *but we have much to do in it*. On each one of us, in some degree, it rests, whether the evils which vex our Church shall continue, and increase; or whether they shall be gradually corrected and removed. Every one may do something, many may do much, to supply the deficiencies, and restore the true character, of the Church; for the Church takes its complexion from the character of its members. Amongst those who read these pages, some, perhaps, may have opportunity and ability to advance the cause of truth, by erecting churches to God, or instigating others to the holy work. Some may feel themselves

urged to promote the foundation of schools of religious education ; some to aid in supplying the lamentable deficiency of labourers in the Lord's vineyard ; some to restore the sacred edifice, in which they are accustomed to worship, to its pristine honour ; some to aid their ministers in their arduous labours to bring those committed to their care to pious and virtuous habits.

Let us all be doing something ; ample room is afforded for the exertions of all. There is one work in which the hearty and diligent endeavours of all good men are especially needed, and in which none is so poor or so humble as not to be able to contribute ; and that is the improvement of the tone of our religious worship. It is something to attend the House of God, and induce others to accompany us, so that they shall be brought under the preaching of the Word ; but this advantage is greatly diminished, if not almost neutralized, when the Service itself—the worship which we pay to God—is not reverent and devout. And, if it be not so, on whom does the blame rest but on ourselves ? The Service itself is holy and good ; but it is ourselves that do not enter into it in spirit and

in truth. Hence the tediousness that some complain of. But let it be so no longer. Let us zealously endeavour to shew that the Service of our Church is not a mere formality, but a free-will offering of the heart and understanding. Let there be no cold silence, no wandering looks, no irreverent carelessness; but let us join with heart and voice. Let a few only give the example of earnestness and reverence, and the flame, once kindled, will spread from heart to heart, and many a soul that is now dead to religious emotion, will be filled with a new spirit, and many a breast, which has no fellowship with the saints, will be warmed with Christian love, and hundreds of thousands, who have no religious sympathy, or are alienated from each other, in moody aversion, will be joined together in a new bond of Christian union.

What the Church most of all needs, in these times of division and demoralization, is the restoration of our common worship. Even if we gain not back those that are now alienated from us, still each congregation, so united, will be a tower of strength, a glorious sight before men and angels. And this restoration of religious feeling appears to be still practicable. There

are a thousand old associations which knit men to their parish churches. Men have not forgotten to reverence the tombs of their fathers. They still value the Church's blessing on their marriages, and on their graves. We are not too far gone to revive the ancient worship. Once re-establish this; once restore a communion of religious feeling, by acts of common worship, and a bond of love and charity will be woven, which will do more to heal the wounds of our social system, than all that can be effected by the wisdom of rulers, or the policy of statesmen.

It is surprising how much evil is done, how much ill-will excited, by obstinacy in non-essential points. Members of the same church ought to be ready to yield to each other in things of no decided importance. The advocate of ancient customs should say to his brother of modern views, "You object to our bowing to the altar, and to our signing ourselves with the cross. We think your objections unreasonable; they are ancient and pious customs, which seem to us commendable; we think we ought to have liberty to use them. Still you object to them, therefore, we will leave them off. But you, on

your part, should pay deference to *our* fancies, if they be so. There should be a reciprocity on both sides. We dislike to see you standing, or sitting, with your backs to the Lord's Table. It pains us, as it would pain you, to see a man in church with his hat on. Well, then, why not humour us, by arranging your churches in a manner which we consider to be reverential. We do not like to see you lounging with your elbows on the Holy Table, or shaking hands with each other within the altar rails, before the communicants have risen from their knees. We do not like the holy Font to be made a receptacle for rubbish, but wish to see it applied to its true and sacred purpose. These, and many other things of the sort, which, perhaps, *you* deem unessential, pain us exceedingly. We hope, therefore, that you will discontinue them. Again, it has been the custom, in most cathedrals and parish churches, to turn to the East in repeating the Creed. It appears to us a reverent custom, emblematic of union of spirit. Why should some of you break through this ancient custom, and show your contempt of what we consider as of some importance, and mark, by your outward action, the disunion of

your spirit with ours? Why not turn with us, for the sake of, if it be only the *appearance* of, fellowship?" So long as we persist in our private fancies, in what we admit to be of little or no essential importance, the nation and Church will continue in its present state of discomfort and distraction. But if people of different views would but yield to each other, in what either party admit to be non-essential, one great obstacle would be removed to that real harmony of spirit which is so desirable in the worshippers of the same God and Father.

The improvement of the tone of our public worship is not important only, with reference to our social condition, but is intimately connected with the personal holiness of each one amongst us. The attainment and establishment in our souls of faith and love, and every Christian grace, the ability to repent of our sins, and to obtain grace and pardon in the day of need, is mainly dependent on the right use which we make of the ordained means. We feel, it may be, a sad want of godly fear; we are not satisfied with our spiritual state; we say, "Would to God we were more religious, and knew Him better, and could love and fear Him as we ought,

and commune with Him like holy men of old." *Then let us use the means ordained for increasing our faith.* Let us oftener enter into His House of Prayer. When we enter there, let us *force ourselves* to consider in Whose presence we are; let us kneel and humbly beseech our Heavenly Father to aid our earnest endeavours after holiness, and send His grace into our souls, and enable us to give our whole heart and understanding to the service in which we are about to engage. Let us thus on our knees resolve to use our utmost endeavours to attend to our devotions. Let us sadly and sincerely confess our sins, and, in awful silence, receive the absolution pronounced over us. Let us pray with earnest spirit, meekly kneeling on our knees; and rise and praise God with fervent heart and voice in the best manner we are able, and listen to His holy word, firmly believing that it is given for our soul's health and instruction.

By thus *obliging ourselves* to the reverent use of the appointed means of grace, and persevering faithfully in them, we shall find a wonderful spirit of Divine energy working in us, and enabling us to join faithfully and sincerely in the sacred services, and to worship God "in

spirit and in truth." It will no longer be an irksome duty, but one of joy and gladness. And the same spirit will accompany us to our homes. The fear of God, which we imbibe in His House, will remain fixed in our hearts. We shall recall something of that long-lost feeling of awe and reverence with which, as children, we first heard of the great God of Heaven and earth, and of our adorable Saviour, and the ever blessed Spirit. We shall learn to live as in God's presence. We shall be continually in the spirit of prayer; we shall be able to wrestle manfully with the risings of sin within us, until we shun it as by instinctive aversion, and our hearts and minds are set on doing the will of God.

These are the practical means, by the reverent use of which, we may, if it please God, escape the cold, ungodly, irreverent spirit which reigns in the world around us, and become living members of that branch of His Apostolic Church in which the providence of God has placed our lot.

APPENDIX.

REMARKS ON THE PERIODICAL PRESS, AND THE CHURCH SOCIETIES.

THERE are one or two topics of temporary interest, which should not be omitted in a practical survey of the English Church. They are topics on which it is difficult to speak, without giving offence; nevertheless, I will endeavour to discuss them with plainness of speech, and, as I trust, without asperity, in the hope that what I say may approve itself to the public sense of what is just and right, and possibly attract the attention of those in whose power it is to apply a remedy to the evils complained of.

The two principal instruments, through which the present excitement and heart-burning is kept up in the Church, and persons of different views are exasperated against each other, are the *Periodical Press*, and the *Church Societies*, as at present conducted. No doubt, the excitement of these bodies is partly symptomatic of

dissensions already existing ; but it is also, in itself, mainly conducive to the continuance of those dissensions, which, in the absence of exciting causes, might be moderated and allayed.

It is impossible to deny that both parties have been to blame, in the use they have made of the Periodical Press ; though, it will be seen, that one party has given an example, which may well be followed by the others. I allude to the discontinuance of the *British Critic*. This periodical was, up to Christmas last, the organ of the extreme High Church party. As regards its general character, it is impossible even for its opponents to withhold their tribute of admiration to the learning and ability with which that work was conducted. For stable and educated men, who could read controversies without danger, there were often, in that able publication, views presented of the most improving and elevated character, and of the utmost value, in the present condition of the Church. Nevertheless, it must be admitted, also, that there was often a presumptuousness of tone, a bitterness of sarcasm, and, withal, a personality of invective, which could not but be highly offensive to those who came under its lash, and tend to provoke anger, rather than establish truth ; and this independently of the disparaging comparisons which were often drawn between our own Church and that of Rome. But the *British Critic* now no longer exists. Owing to the want of sympathy in those who once coincided in its views ; and, I believe, I may venture to say, in consequence of the repeated remonstrances of many of the Anglo-Catholic party, that periodical has been discontinued.

Now, what has been done by the High Church party

ought to be done by others. I appeal to the moderate and respectable men amongst the Evangelicals, that it is their duty to exercise that influence which they possess, either to abolish altogether, or to change the tone, of those periodicals and journals which represent their views. If it were only for the sake of the readers amongst their own set, the discontinuance, or amendment, of some of them would be most beneficial; for it is next to impossible that persons should read them, week after week, without being personally the worse for it—without imbibing from them a bitterness of spirit, a dislike of their brethren, and a malicious joy at their mistakes and failings, which is sadly inconsistent with the Christian character. Publications of this description may, for a moment serve the cause of a party; but it is quite out of the question, that Christian truth or concord can be promoted by such a mode of controversy. There is a language of honest indignation, which is quite consistent with Christian charity; but a perpetual seeking of cause for cavilling and damaging the reputation of opponents, by the various means that anonymous writers too well know how to employ, can never be a fit mode of carrying on a religious controversy.

I do, therefore, very seriously put it to the consciences of good and religious men amongst the Low Church party, that they cease to encourage this system of warfare. It is not enough for them to say that they disapprove of it. They must take active measures to put down a system, which is alike ruining the souls of individuals, and preventing the unity of the Church. The Church can never be at peace, whilst the Periodical Press sends forth its offensive personalities. All good men ought to resolve to give up a mode of controversy,

which must cause the most serious injury to religion itself, by obliterating its most essential virtue—charity.

Another cause of irritation in the Church is *the present management of its Religious Societies*. These societies were, for the most part, instituted by excellent and benevolent men, for the purpose of effecting important objects, which, *at that time*, the Church, as a body, were not prepared to undertake. But, from the circumstance of their being irresponsible, and subject to no effectual control of the rulers of the Church, they have become, in many instances, the organs of party views, and expend on the objects of a mere section of the Church, those energies and means which ought to be devoted to the great cause of Christian truth.

Nor is this the whole of the mischief; for, in order to obtain funds for their support, every town and village is agitated by busy partizans; other Societies are abused and misrepresented; and party strife is kindled throughout the land. Well-meaning people deceive themselves, and fancy that they are doing that for the love of God, or of their fellow-creatures, which is too often done out of mere party spirit; and with the most pious and excellent objects ostensibly in view, discord is spread in peaceable parishes; the feelings of the parochial clergy outraged; their views thwarted, and much unchristian bitterness is engendered. The Church will never be at peace, until these Societies are put on a different footing, and placed under the *bona fide* management of the rulers of the Church, or those by them appointed, without reference to party feelings and interests. Will it be said that, if these Societies were placed under the management of the Bishops, they would cease to receive the support of their present contributors? Surely, that is

neither more nor less than an acknowledgment that they are the mere organ of a party, and not of the Church, and a conclusive argument, with all good men, that they ought to be amended or abolished.

This censure, however, is not applicable to all Societies. There are some which are already under the virtual control of the Bishops, and not liable to the same objections. Amongst these may be mentioned the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, the National Society for the Education of the Poor, the Additional Curates' Fund, and the Incorporated Society for Building Churches. These institutions employ their funds without any reference to party views, and, therefore, deserve encouragement, as the best channels of our benevolence, under existing circumstances; though, in common with others, their constitution might be improved, by making them more directly organs of the Church.

On the other hand, the Church Missionary Society, the Pastoral Aid Society, and some others, devote their energies and means solely to the promotion of Low Church, or Evangelical, views. I am not stating anything which the managers of those Societies would wish to disclaim, but the acknowledged principle on which they act. The different systems adopted by the different Societies, ought to be distinctly understood. It may be illustrated thus:—If the clergyman of a populous place desires the aid of an additional curate, and applies to the Additional Curates' Fund, his case is duly considered, and, if it appears to be one which needs assistance, the Society grants him aid, *leaving the selection of the curate solely to himself, and to the Bishop of the diocese.* On the other hand, the Pastoral Aid

Society, before making a grant, requires to know the name of the curate selected; *and if he is not of Low Church principles, they refuse to make a grant.* So that, if the applicant will not have a curate of their own peculiar views, he can have none. The Church Missionary Society goes even beyond this, and actually has recently removed a clergyman, from a colonial diocese, in *direct opposition* to the wishes of the Bishop.

Hence it appears, that the Church Missionary and Pastoral Aid Societies, are the organs of a section of the Church; while the others which I have mentioned represent the Church at large. It is not that one class of Societies represent one set of opinions, and one, another; but that one class represents the Low Church, or Evangelical party; the other the Anglican Church, without reference to party or opinion.

At the risk of much obloquy, I have thought it right to make this plain statement, because I feel most strongly that the proceedings of certain Societies are, next to the Periodical Press, the great cause of disturbance to the peace of the Church, spreading party spirit and alienation among Churchmen, in every parish of the land. The time may come, and that soon, when it will be absolutely necessary, for the rulers of the Church to adopt some measures to keep the peace, and it may be well worth their consideration, whether the first measure within the sphere of their influence, should not be *the remodelling the Church Societies*, and making them the direct organs of the Church itself, instead of being in the hands of irresponsible committees. It may not be easy to induce the committees to give up the power they possess. Power in the hands of men of party zeal, who have persuaded themselves that they

are acting on religious principles, is not willingly parted with. Still if the Bishops declare the measure necessary, it cannot be doubted that the Church at large, would support them in the re-adjustment of these Societies. It is quite impossible that there should be any peace and quiet in the Church, until these perpetual blisters are removed.

There is one other Society respecting which I desire to add a few words.

The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge is an institution which has long claimed the regard of all Churchmen. Founded originally by some of the brightest ornaments of the English Communion, and maintaining a consistent character of orthodoxy and soundness, it has been the means of preserving the true principles of the Church in an age when faith was well-nigh dead, and charity lukewarm. Certainly there is much objection to the democratical nature of its constitution, which furnishes an arena of debate, in its monthly meetings, highly prejudicial to the unanimity of the Church. Formerly, the Bishops used to attend its meetings; but, latterly, in consequence of the stormy character of its proceedings, they have all withdrawn. The Archbishop himself is said to have recorded his dissatisfaction, by the emphatic words of St. James, "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

Recently, however, circumstances have arisen, which imperatively demand the attention of all those who desire to preserve entire the principles of the Church. It appears, that of late years, new principles have gradually been introduced into the publications of the Society, and in particular, that considerable alterations have been made, and this, as it would seem without

authority, in the works of old Divines, some of them the founders of the Institution. In some instances, whole passages have been omitted—such for instance, as contain the opinions of the old writers, on the use of Festivals, or of the Offertory. In other instances, the language of the writers has been positively altered, and their sentiments greatly modified. It may be readily believed, that whoever made these alterations, did so under the actual impression, that he was improving the works of our standard Divines, by adapting them to modern use. Still the result is, that by suppressing some passages, and modifying others, the Bishops and Divines of the English Church, are made to speak very differently from what they really did. They have in fact, been dressed up in the garb of the nineteenth century. If these mutilations were made with the intention of giving a false impression of the sentiments of old Divines, it cannot but be regarded as a most objectionable proceeding. But we may charitably believe, that there was no evil intention in the minds of those who made them. Now, however, that public attention has been called to the fact, and the extreme objectionableness of mutilating standard authors, has been pointed out; it must surely be admitted, that they who maintain the system, and continue to spread among the people misrepresentations of our old standard theology, are acting a most disingenuous part.

I am not sorry to close my book with this remarkable illustration of the principles which it advocates. *All that we contend for, is, that the English Church, should be upheld in her true character.* This is the principle of Anglo-Catholicism. We ask that those formularies, which were compiled by our Reformers, and have received the

sanction of our Kings, Parliaments, and Convocation, should be acknowledged as the laws by which we are to be guided;—and, as soon as practicable, should be restored amongst us. And now again, we ask that the theology of our Church should be restored to its genuine form. We require that our old Bishops and Divines, should be allowed to speak their own language; and not be compelled to bear unwilling testimony to the theology of the nineteenth century.

And we appeal to the common sense of all men, that they who refuse to conform to the written laws of the Church, and who mutilate the language of its most revered Divines, are the unsound churchmen;—and that those who desire to abide by her laws, and follow in the footsteps of her holiest sons, are her true and consistent members.



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